



BREAKING BUBBLES

by L. M. Myles

Characters:

THE DOCTOR

Space-time traveller

PERI

The Doctor's companion

SAFIRA VALTRIS (F)

A deposed empress, 50s

LARIS (M)

A senior interstellar prison transport officer, 40

TONDRA (F)

A junior interstellar prison transport officer, 30

AKROS (M)

A general loyal to Safira, 50

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1: INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE

(FX: ENGINE HUM. REGULAR BEEPS FROM CONTROLS: ALL IS WELL.)

TONDRA:

Power to FTL drive stable. Radiation levels normal. Oxygen levels – [normal]

LARIS:

Normal? Could you take your eyes off the controls for ten seconds and concentrate on the game? It's no fun winning this easily.

(FX: CHIPPER ELECTRONIC SOUNDS OF LARIS'S GAME.)

TONDRA:

Oxygen levels normal. (BEAT) There, done. Now, it's my turn?

(FX: CHIPPER ELECTRONIC SOUND.)

LARIS:

Tell me you're not going to do this for the whole trip.

TONDRA:

The regulations are clear, ma'am.

LARIS:

Tondra, if something unfortunate happens, believe me, we'll know about it.

2: EXT. A PALACE GARDEN

(FX: OCCASIONAL BIRDSONG, THE SOUND OF A FOUNTAIN NEARBY, LEAVES RUSTLING.)

PERI:

I've visited gardens like these at a chateaux in France, but we're definitely not on Earth. The leaves are all wrong.

DOCTOR:

Yes, I'd come to the same conclusion myself.

PERI:

Really?

DOCTOR:

Oh, yes. But well done for working it out too.

PERI:

All right then, if you're so clever, Doctor, how about you tell me where we are?

DOCTOR:

It could be any number of places. It's not as though formal gardens are limited to any particular time or place.

PERI:

In other words, you don't know.

DOCTOR:

Let's just enjoy the walk, shall we? I'd have thought you'd be glad to land somewhere peaceful.

PERI:

I am. I wouldn't mind taking a few cuttings too, but I'd rather ask if it was okay with whoever owns this place first.

DOCTOR:

There doesn't seem to be anyone around.

PERI:

I'd noticed, but this sort of garden must take a small army to maintain.

DOCTOR:

Perhaps it's their day off.

PERI:

Or someone likes their privacy and we missed the 'no entry on pain of death' sign.

[FX: SAFIRA APPROACHES AS PERI'S SPEAKING, WALKING ON GRAVEL PATH.]

SAFIRA:

There's no sign.

DOCTOR:

Hello! We didn't realise there was anyone else here.

PERI:

We were just admiring this beautiful garden of yours.

DOCTOR:

I'm the Doctor, and this is Peri.

PERI:

Hi!

SAFIRA:

I see... I wasn't expecting visitors. This is quite extraordinary. May I ask how you got here?

DOCTOR:

Oh, the usual way.

SAFIRA:

Which is?

DOCTOR:

We landed.

SAFIRA:

In a spaceship?

DOCTOR:

That's right.

SAFIRA:

I see. (BEAT) Well, where are my manners? I'm Safira Valtris. Very pleased to meet you both. I was about to have some tea in the pagoda. It's not much, but you're welcome to join me.

DOCTOR:

That sounds lovely, thank you. Tea, Peri?

PERI:

I don't suppose you've got any coffee?

DOCTOR:

I'm so sorry, you'll have to excuse my companion; she's an American.

3: INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE

(FX: ALARM GOING OFF. OBNOXIOUS BEEPS AS BUTTONS RAPIDLY PRESSED.)

TONDRA:

What? What is it? What's happening?

LARIS:

(FX: BUTTONS BEEPING) What d'you think I'm trying to find out?

TONDRA:

(CHECKING INSTRUMENTS) I don't see any system malfunctions.

LARIS:

No, but there's been an internal security breach.

TONDRA:

Where?

LARIS:

Found it: the prisoner's cell, it's been locked.

TONDRA:

It's supposed - [to be]

LARIS:

It's supposed to be locked from the *outside*. Now it's locked from the inside too. She can't get out and we can't get in.

TONDRA:

Why'd she do that?

LARIS:

No idea, but we'd better get down there and find out. Whatever she's doing, it's not going to be good news.

MUSIC: TROUBLE ON THE WAY.

4: EXT. PALACE GARDEN, IN A PAGODA

(FX: CLINK OF PLATES, CUTLERY. TEA BEING POURED.)

PERI:

You've got such a great variety of plant life here. Is it all indigenous?

SAFIRA:

To the planet, yes. You've an interest in flora?

PERI:

I'm a botany student.

SAFIRA:

Ah. I designed part of this garden, but it's only ever been a hobby for me. I remember there being a lovely botanical garden a few hundred kilometres north of this one. There were plants from all over the Empire there. There used to be, anyway.

PERI:

What happened to it?

SAFIRA:

If you believe the rumours, the Emperor blew it up in a fit of pique... but I wouldn't want to speak ill of our beloved sovereign.

(FX: EARTHQUAKE-Y SOUND. THE SHIP'S JUMPING FROM HYPERSPACE BACK TO NORMAL SPACE.)

PERI:

(STRUGGLING TO STAND UPRIGHT) What's happening? Is that an earthquake?

DOCTOR:

No, Peri, I don't think so.

MUSIC: FOREBODING.

5: INT. SPACESHIP CORRIDOR

(FX: QUAKING STOPS. BUTTONS ARE PRESSED.)

TONDRA:

The ship's jumped back to normal space, but we're not moving. If this is an escape attempt, shouldn't she be setting a new course?

LARIS:

Not if she expects another ship to come and pick her up.

(FX: IRRITATING BUTTON BLEEPS.)

TONDRA:

It's not just navigation, ma'am. I can't access anything. We're locked out of the whole computer system.

6: EXT. PALACE GARDENS, IN A PAGODA

PERI:

We're on a *spaceship*?

DOCTOR:

That's right, Peri. And that felt like we just made an unexpected leap from hyperspace to normal space.

SAFIRA:

You didn't know we're on a spaceship? One usually knows where one lands, Doctor.

PERI:

Not when one's travelling with him, one doesn't. What about all this? You can't tell me this whole garden is all on a ship. That horizon's got to be miles from here.

SAFIRA:

It's a holosensory recreation. It's meant to make my incarceration more tolerable during the long days between prisons.

DOCTOR:

Prisons?

SAFIRA:

Yes, Doctor. This is a prison transport. And I'm the prisoner.

DOCTOR:

Ah.

SAFIRA:

Don't worry, I'm not dangerous.

DOCTOR:

Well, you would say that.

PERI:

What did you do?

SAFIRA:

Deposed the Emperor.

DOCTOR:

Not a very successful deposition, if you ended up in here.

SAFIRA:

It was completely successful, Doctor. I ruled this Empire for almost ten years, and the life of every citizen was the better for it.

DOCTOR:

I take it not everyone agreed with that assessment.

SAFIRA:

Unfortunately not. I was betrayed, by people who cared more for glory and titles than the good of the Empire, and with their support the Emperor was able to regain the throne.

DOCTOR:

Well, you're still alive, at least.

SAFIRA:

Oh, yes. Executing me would set an unfortunate precedent. He's my cousin, you see. One can't be seen to be executing members of the Imperial Family. It might give the common people ideas.

PERI:

I guess democracy hasn't really caught on here, has it?

(FX: LOUD METALLIC BANGING)

SAFIRA:

Ah, my jailors have arrived.

DOCTOR:

They don't sound very friendly.

SAFIRA:

No, and they're going to be quite unhappy with me for the engine sabotage. As for you two, whatever I say, they're going to believe you're a party to it.

PERI:

Please tell me that doesn't mean they're going to shoot us.

SAFIRA:

I'm terribly sorry. Best finish your tea quickly.

7: INT. SPACESHIP, CORRIDOR (OUTSIDE THE CELL DOOR)

(FX: LOUD METALLIC BANGING)

LARIS:

(BANGING FIST ON DOOR) Open the door, Valtris. I swear if you don't unlock this thing, we'll blow it up.

TONDRA:

Ma'am, I doubt she can hear you.

LARIS:

Get the comms working then!

TONDRA:

I can't, ma'am. Even the non-essential systems are frozen.

LARIS:

How's that pulse cannon looking? You got it working? Or has she shut that down too?

TONDRA:

No, ma'am, it's ready.

LARIS:

Right, then this ought to be a very satisfying explosion.

(FX: PULSE CANNON TARGETTING AND FIRING FOLLOWED BY A VERY SATISFYING EXPLOSION.)

TONDRA:

We're in, ma'am.

MUSIC: DRAMATIC SURGE.

8: EXT. PALACE GARDEN

(FX: AFTERMATH OF THE EXPLOSION.)

SAFIRA:

Officer Laris, Officer Tondra, what a pleasure to see you both again.

LARIS:

Quiet, Valtris.

SAFIRA:

That's really no way to speak your Empress.

LARIS:

Not in the mood.

TONDRA:

Ma'am, please raise your hands, slowly.

SAFIRA:

That's much more pleasant. You see, Laris, respectful whilst still refusing to acknowledge that I was anointed and crowned.

LARIS:

Who are you two? How did you get in here?

DOCTOR:

I'm the Doctor, and this is Peri.

TONDRA:

Stowaways, ma'am. And almost certainly complicit in the sabotage.

DOCTOR:

Now hang on a minute – [we didn't]

TONDRA:

Ma'am, regulations regarding stowaways on Imperial prison transports are clear: summary execution.

(FX: SPACE GUN POWERING UP)

LARIS:

Tondra, this – [is not]

SAFIRA:

They're from Imperial Intelligence, you fools. I don't think my cousin will be too happy if you shoot two of his agents.

TONDRA:

They don't look like Imperial Intelligence agents to me.

LARIS:

No-one should have been able to get into this cell without us knowing about it.

DOCTOR:

Exactly. Unless they had higher authorisation, of course.

LARIS:

That doesn't mean I believe you, it means you've bought a few minutes to explain yourselves. So, *agents*, what are you doing in here?

DOCTOR:

Before you decided it was a good idea to put a large, smoking hole in the door, we were interrogating the prisoner.

LARIS:

I don't suppose she's told you what she's done to the ship? We've been locked out of the computer system, and the engines are dead.

SAFIRA:

Well, I'm delighted to hear everything's going to plan. If you'll excuse me, officers. (GRABS PERI)

PERI:

Hey! Let me go, what – [are you doing]?

(FX: MATTER TRANSPORTATION BEAM. PERI'S VOICE FADES OUT)

LARIS:

Where's she gone? Why's she taken your accomplice?

DOCTOR:

How should I know? Isn't the security here your responsibility, Officer? You should be telling *me* where my friend is and how you're going to get her back safely.

LARIS:

Listen to me, Doctor. I'm responsible for seeing that Safira Valtris arrives at her next prison. Whoever you and that woman are, you are getting in the way of me doing my job.

DOCTOR:

At the moment, I care rather less about your job than I do about what's happened to Peri.

LARIS:

Either your friend is in league with the prisoner, or she's been taken hostage. Either way, we find one, we find the other.

DOCTOR:

That was a short-range teleport so they must still be on the ship. How big is it?

TONDRA:

Not big, only about five kilometres, end to end.

DOCTOR:

Five kilometres? We'll have to locate them by conducting an internal scan.

LARIS:

But I told you, we're locked out of our computer systems –

DOCTOR:

Yes, well, maybe I'll be able to help with that.

LARIS:

First an Imperial agent, and now a computer engineer?

DOCTOR:

I have dabbled. What harm can it do to let me try? Either I succeed, and you regain access to your computer, or I fail, and you've lost nothing.

LARIS:

All right, Doctor, we'll take you to the bridge, but move slowly.

DOCTOR:

Just one question first.

LARIS:

Make it quick.

DOCTOR:

Peri. Will she be safe with this Safira?

LARIS:

That woman has bombed whole planets into dust to get what she wants. So, no, I shouldn't think so. Now move.

MUSIC: TERRIBLE PROSPECTS.

9: INT. PALACE LIBRARY

(FX: PERI AND SAFIRA REMATERIALISE)

PERI:

What just happened? Where are we?

SAFIRA:

Another part of the holosensory recreation: this was my palace library. I imagine something terrible's happened to the real one by now: my idiot cousin's probably burnt all the books...

(FX: BOOKS BEING TAKEN FROM SHELVES AND FLICKED THROUGH: SAFIRA IS SEARCHING THE LIBRARY.)

PERI:

If all this is just holograms, can't those soldiers shut it down whenever they like?

SAFIRA:

Not any more. I've got control of the ship and this projection, thanks to an appallingly large bribe and one highly unscrupulous electrical engineer.

PERI:

The Doctor, he's still with those two prison guards -

SAFIRA:

I'm sure he's fine. People tend to get very paranoid at the mention of Imperial Intelligence.

PERI:

We're not intelligence agents.

SAFIRA:

I know.

PERI:

Then why did you say we were?

SAFIRA:

I didn't want to see you killed on my account. And though I'd dearly love to know who you are and how you really got here, I've rather more pressing concerns.

PERI:

(PICKS UP BOOK) Hey, this book's about you.

SAFIRA:

Ah, yes, that one was published during my cousin's second reign: propaganda to discredit me.

PERI:

What's it doing in your library?

SAFIRA:

It's important to know what your enemies think of you, and what they want other people to think of you.

PERI:

Even the unflattering things?

SAFIRA:

Especially the unflattering things.

(FX: FLICKING THROUGH PAGES)

PERI:

It sounds like you started a lot of wars.

SAFIRA:

I started *one* war, Peri. It just went on rather a long time. And spread across a few dozen worlds. (FX: SMALL, METALLIC CLINK.) Peri, would you mind checking these books?

PERI:

Sure, am I looking for anything in particular?

SAFIRA:

Certain components were concealed within this projection. I was told they would be hidden inside one of these volumes. Unfortunately they neglected to mention which one.

PERI:

(FX: SEARCHING BOOKS) What exactly are these components for??

SAFIRA:

To enable my escape.

PERI:

Of course.

(FX: SHE OPENS A BOOK, SOME SMALL METAL COMPONENTS FALL OUT)

PERI:

Er... I think I've found them.

10: INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE

FX: DOCTOR TAPPING AT KEYBOARD. COMPUTER BLEEPING NEGATIVELY.

LARIS:

Can you fix it or not?

DOCTOR: (ATTEMPTING TO ACCESS COMPUTER)

I don't know. You're going to have to give me more time.

LARIS:

Doctor, we're dead in space. I've got to assume that there's a ship on its way to collect the prisoner. So we have to get out of here as soon as possible.

DOCTOR:

Then I suggest you be quiet and let me concentrate.

TONDRA:

He's stalling, ma'am. Giving Valtris's rescue ship time to arrive.

LARIS:

If you think we're wasting time, feel free to go and search for the prisoner, Tondra. There are only about five hundred different places she could be hiding.

TONDRA:

Very well, ma'am.

(FX: TONDRA EXITS.)

DOCTOR:

There's something not right about all this.

LARIS:

Isn't that what you're meant to be fixing?

DOCTOR:

That's not what I mean. This computer system of yours isn't locked down, it isn't *there*. There's a very complicated lockout, but no actual system underneath. It's like... this computer is just an empty box!

LARIS:

Don't be ridiculous. The lights are on, the oxygen's flowing. If we've got no computer, how's everything still working?

DOCTOR:

That's a very good question.

LARIS:

My game's gone.

DOCTOR:

Hmm?

LARIS:

I left it there. A cube, about the size of my hand, lots of flashing lights.

DOCTOR:

It was new, this game? You'd only just brought it on board?

LARIS:

Yes. So?

DOCTOR:

Of course! It's the one detail she wouldn't know about!

LARIS:

What are you talking about?

DOCTOR:

This isn't your ship! This is all a holosensory simulation! We're still in the prison cell. When we walked out, we didn't walk back onto the real ship, we walked out into another part of the simulation.

LARIS:

So now what do we do?

DOCTOR:

We have to find the real way out! Come on! Back to the gardens!

11: INT. PALACE LIBRARY

FX: SAFIRA BUILDING GUN, PIECES CLICKING/SCREWING TOGETHER.

SAFIRA:

I hope I remember how to put one of these together. It has been a while.

PERI:

What is it?

SAFIRA:

A gun.

PERI:

Oh great.

SAFIRA:

Just in case of emergencies.

PERI:

That's hardly reassuring.

SAFIRA:

If it makes you feel any better, it also contains a communications device which will let me see what's going on in the rest of the ship.

(FX: TUNES IN DEVICE)

LARIS: (DISTORT, VIA SAFIRA'S GADGET)

That looks exactly like the hole I blew in the cell door.

(CONTINUOUS INTO NEXT SCENE)

12. INT: SPACESHIP CORRIDOR/PALACE GARDENS (CONTINUOUS)

DOCTOR:

Of course it does. She must have reconstructed it in perfect detail.

(FX: DOCTOR AND LARIS ENTER CELL TO EXT: PALACE GARDENS)

LARIS:

This is definitely the right palace garden? I mean, what if that wasn't the door we left through. And we've gone into another projection, or a projection of a projection, or – [a projection]

DOCTOR:

Don't think about it! You'll only give yourself a headache or, worse, you'll give me one.

LARIS:

How do we get back to the real ship? I only see the exit we came through.

DOCTOR:

The real exit has to be here somewhere. Do you remember where you were standing, when you came in?

LARIS:

Yeah, I came through here, just on the edge of the grass.

DOCTOR:

Really? You're sure? Go and stand there. Think back.

LARIS:

Maybe... maybe I was a few steps to the right.

DOCTOR:

Take a few steps to the right then.

FX: SHIMMERING/WARPING.

LARIS:

My foot! It's vanished!

DOCTOR:

Just step back and it'll reappear. There, you see.

(CONTINUOUS INTO NEXT SCENE)

13: INT. PALACE LIBRARY (CONTINUOUS)

DOCTOR:

(DISTORT, VIA SAFIRA'S GADGET): That, Officer Laris, is where our exit is!

(FX: BUTTONS PRESSED)

SAFIRA:

A slight problem. It looks like my jailors have discovered my little ruse. Your friend, the Doctor, how is he with computers?

PERI:

Terrible. Doesn't know the first thing about technology. He's got this phobia about computers in particular. Keeps thinking they're trying to take over the world.

SAFIRA:

You're not a very good liar.

PERI:

Look, we've got nothing to do with this. Please, don't hurt him.

SAFIRA:

I don't intend to. Peri, I've been shunted from planet to planet, prison to prison, for seven years. All I want is my freedom.

PERI:

Is that all? Or are you going to start another war once you're out of here?

SAFIRA:

You don't know my cousin. So long as he can squander his days devising fanciful entertainments, he leaves the actual ruling to his officials. And all they're concerned with is accumulating wealth and power.

PERI:

Of course, you're not at all interested in those things.

SAFIRA:

I won't deny I enjoy them, but I do care about the people of this Empire and delivering them from hardship.

PERI:

What would your cousin say, if someone asked him about you?

SAFIRA:

After he'd finished the incoherent ranting? He'd say that I was a jumped up general who didn't know her place. (BEAT) I am doing this for my people, Peri. For their salvation. You don't know anything about the situation.

PERI:

I know that in wars a lot of innocent people always end up dead.

MUSIC: FOREBODING INTO TRANSITIONAL.

14: INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE

(FX: DOCTOR AND LARIS ENTER BRIDGE)

LARIS:

My game! Right where I left it. (FX: CHIPPER ELECTRONIC NOISE)

DOCTOR:

Then I think we can safely say this is the real McCoy. (FX: BUTTONS PRESSED) Yes, that's more like it. Now, let's see if I can get these computers working again.

LARIS:

This isn't good.

DOCTOR:

Actually I think I'm making some progress.

LARIS:

Not that, this. We've still got sensor data coming in: there's a blip on the edge of scanning range. Looks like a warship. No identification signal.

DOCTOR:

Maybe they haven't spotted us, maybe they're just passing by.

LARIS:

No such luck. They're on a direct course. It has to be Valtris's rescue ship. If we're lucky we've got twenty minutes until they arrive.

DOCTOR:

I'm not sure that's going to be enough time.

LARIS:

Well, do *something*.

(FX: LOTS OF BUTTONS PRESSED)

DOCTOR:

Right, I've managed to gain access to your communications system. If there's anyone you can contact for help, now's your chance.

LARIS:

I suppose there might be an Imperial patrol nearby. (FX: BUTTONS PRESSED) I've sent an emergency call requesting military assistance. (FX: BUTTONS PRESSED) Now for a word with Valtris.

15: INT. PALACE LIBRARY (CONTINUOUS)

(FX: COMMS OPEN)

LARIS: (OVER COMMS)

Valtris, can you hear me? Valtris?

SAFIRA:

Officer Laris, so you found your way back to the bridge then? And got some control of the ship back. Well done.

LARIS: (OVER COMMS)

I suggest you surrender, Valtris; I've summoned an Imperial flotilla to these co-ordinates.

SAFIRA:

Even if you have, they won't get here before my ship does.

(FX: COMMS OFF)

SAFIRA:

The Doctor did this. Those two haven't the skills or knowledge to unlock the computer systems. So who are you people? Why are you here?

PERI:

I told you, we're just travellers.

SAFIRA:

Just travellers who happened to show up the moment I try to make my escape?

PERI:

I'm telling you the truth. We're not on anyone's side.

SAFIRA:

No? Then if the Doctor can help my captors... you can help me.

16: INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE

LARIS:

I think I can get some visuals from inside the cell now. (FX: BUTTONS) Yes. We can see how Valtris and your friend are doing.

DOCTOR:

Thank you, Laris.

LARIS:

Not a problem. (FX: SCREEN PICTURE RESOLVING) Here we go...

SAFIRA: (VIA MONITOR)

You're coming with me to the airlock, Peri.

PERI: (VIA MONITOR)

You could just let me stay here.

(CONTINUOUS INTO NEXT SCENE)

17: INT. PALACE LIBRARY (CONTINUOUS)

PERI:

What do you need me for? Unless I'm a hostage.

SAFIRA:

Let's not make this any more unpleasant than necessary, Peri.

(FX: LIBRARY DOOR BANGS OPEN)

TONDRA:

Don't move, either of you! Put that gun on the table, Valtris. Slowly.

(FX: SAFIRA PUTS GUN DOWN ON TABLE)

SAFIRA:

Officer Tondra. You intend to kill me?

TONDRA:

Oh, you have no idea how much I've longed for this moment. I had arranged for you to expire in an unfortunate accident, a life support failure, but this is so much better. To shoot you attempting to escape. To look you in the eye as I pull the trigger. It's more than I'd ever dared hope for.

SAFIRA:

I am a member of the Imperial Family and the Emperor's cousin. If you harm me, you will suffer. Your family will suffer.

TONDRA:

Not much of a threat, *Majesty*. My family is dead, killed when you bombarded my home-world.

SAFIRA:

That must have been such a long time ago. So do you feel good now your revenge is finally at hand? Do you imagine my death will give you peace of mind? It won't. What you're feeling now, it will never get any better.

PERI:

She's right, Tondra. Killing is never the answer. It just leads to more revenge, more killing, more people suffering like you have suffered.

TONDRA:

I don't care. I don't care.

(FX: SPACE GUN CHARGING)

SAFIRA:

I've had enough people point guns at me to know when they're capable of pulling the trigger. You're not a killer, Tondra. Put it down.

TONDRA:

No.

SAFIRA:

Then shoot me. Go on, get it over with. You want your revenge, then kill me.

TONDRA:

I... (FX: PUTS GUN DOWN)

SAFIRA:

That's it, Tondra. Lower your weapon. Now we can (STRIKES HER) talk!

(FX: SAFIRA OVERPOWERS TONDRA. KNOCKS HER OUT.)

PERI:

Is she dead?

SAFIRA:

No, just unconscious. I should probably kill her while I have the chance.

PERI:

You can't be serious.

SAFIRA:

If we had time for a trial, the penalty would be execution.

PERI:

But there hasn't been a trial. You can't just shoot her in cold blood.

SAFIRA:

(HESITATES) No. No, I suppose not.

(FX: SAFIRA POWERS DOWN HER GUN. COMMS BLEEP)

AKROS: (OVER COMMS)

This is General Akros calling the Empress Safira, do you read me?

SAFIRA:

I'm here, Akros. What's your status?

AKROS: (OVER COMMS)

Majesty, we're about to dock with the prison ship, but an Imperial flotilla has just jumped into this sector, closing fast. Estimate fifteen minutes until weapons range.

SAFIRA:

Continue docking procedure. I'll be at the airlock shortly. Valtris out.

(FX: COMMS)

SAFIRA:

Alright, Peri. We're leaving. Try not to do anything stupid.

(CONTINUOUS INTO NEXT SCENE)

18: INT. SPACESHIP BRIDGE

PERI: (VIA MONITOR)
Or what? You'll shoot me?

SAFIRA: (VIA MONITOR)
If you refuse to co-operate, yes. Now move!

(FX: MONITOR OFF. LARIS COLLECTS WEAPON FROM GUN LOCKER.)

DOCTOR:
Where do you think you're going, Officer?

LARIS:
Where d'you think? The prisoner's escaping, my colleague's been overpowered. I have to stop her.

DOCTOR:
Did it escape your notice that she's holding Peri hostage?

LARIS:
I'm sorry about that, Doctor, but my first duty is to stop Valtris getting off this ship.

DOCTOR:
And I think I have a way to do that. Sit down.

LARIS:
Doctor, I really don't - (think)

DOCTOR:
Your computer game, if you please.

(FX: LARIS HANDS OVER THE GAME, THE DOCTOR BREAKS IT OPEN.)

LARIS:
Hey, d'you know how much that cost?

DOCTOR:
Whatever it was, it came cheap. It may be about to save your life. Pry that access panel off, would you? (FX: METAL CLANGING OF PANEL BEING REMOVED) We may not have control of your ship's computer, but this is a rather sophisticated little game you've got here. With a small amount of ingenuity, I should be able to link it into your ship's computer and use it to get access to some of the other systems.

(FX: CLANG OF OTHER SHIP DOCKING)

LARIS:

Better hurry up, Doctor. That was the rebel ship docking.

19. INT. SPACESHIP, OUTSIDE AN AIRLOCK

(FX: SAFIRA AND PERI RUNNING. COMMS BLEEP.)

AKROS: (OVER COMMS)

Majesty, the Imperial flotilla is almost within weapons range, but we can't raise our defence shields while we're docked.

SAFIRA:

We're approaching the airlock now. I'll be with you momentarily. Valtris out.

(FX COMMS OFF)

PERI:

Do you really think the other ships are going to let you get away?

(FX: AIRLOCK OPENING.)

SAFIRA:

I wish them the very best of luck in stopping me.

(FX: AIRLOCK OPENS)

SAFIRA:

After you, Peri. Into the airlock. Take your time, please, no sudden movements.

(FX: THEY STEP THROUGH THE AIRLOCK AND ARRIVE IN THE PALACE GARDEN.)

SAFIRA

What the - ?

PERI:

We're back in the palace garden! We're still inside the hologram!

SAFIRA:

What - ? Oh, I see. This is your friend's work, isn't it? Very clever, Doctor! You may have trapped me in my cell but I still have a ship out there.

PERI:

But you can't make it to your ship before that flotilla starts firing on it though, can you?

SAFIRA:

(BEAT) No. I can't. But I can still make a fight of it.

PERI:

Is that what you want? You start firing on that other ship, they'll fire back, and people will die. This escape of yours, no-one was meant to get killed, were they? You said all you wanted was to get away.

SAFIRA:

So... what? I should give up? Surrender?

PERI:

Yes! If you don't want anyone to die today, you have to.

SAFIRA:

Throw everything away? Everything I've worked for? Just like that?

PERI:

Ask yourself, how many lives is your freedom worth? How many people have to die? How many deaths do you want on your conscience?

SAFIRA:

I... don't know...

PERI:

It's like you said to Tondra. She wasn't prepared to kill... and I don't think you are, either.

SAFIRA:

You're right: this was meant to be a bloodless escape. And now... (FX: COMMS BLEEP) Akros...abort mission. Return to base. Do not engage the enemy ship.

AKROS: (OVER COMMS)

Majesty, are you certain?

SAFIRA:

You heard me: abort. Get your ship to safety. I'll contact you when I can. Valtris out.

(FX: END COMMS THEN OPEN COMMS)

SAFIRA:

This is the Empress Safira to Officer Laris. I offer you my surrender.

20: EXT: PALACE GARDENS

FX: HATCHWAY WHIRRS SMOOTHLY OPEN.

DOCTOR:

There, that's most of the damage from your pulse cannon repaired. One prison cell, back in working order.

LARIS:

Thank you, Doctor. I've put Officer Tondra in one of our less lavish cells.

PERI:

What's going to happen to her?

LARIS:

That's for the courts to decide.

SAFIRA:

They might very well conclude she's a hero for what she tried to do, but this incident will still be considered a political embarrassment; someone is going to pay for it. If you're not careful, Laris, that someone will be you. So let me help you.

LARIS:

Help me? How?

SAFIRA:

If you allowed me to go free, my supporters would be grateful. They'd make sure you, and your family, were protected.

LARIS:

Your supporters are only interested in stirring up another revolution.

SAFIRA:

And I could stop them, if you released me. I can't negotiate a peace settlement while I'm a prisoner. Think about it. I'll be in the library when you've decided.

(FX: SAFIRA EXITS VIA GRAVELLY PATH.)

DOCTOR:

You're thinking about it, aren't you?

LARIS:

She could be right; if she was free, and willing to talk about peace...

DOCTOR:

I hope she means it.

PERI:

From what I saw today, I think she does.

LARIS:

Well, at the moment, I've got an Imperial flotilla insisting on sending a squad on-board. I'm sure they'll want to talk to you. I'll have to ask you to stay in this cell for now. You are still technically stowaways, after all.

DOCTOR:

Not a problem, Officer. Bye for now.

(FX: LARIS EXITS. CELL DOOR LOCKED.)

DOCTOR:

Peri, you know we never did get to the centre of that hedge maze.

PERI:

The hedge maze? That would be the one with the blue box parked somewhere inside it?

DOCTOR:

Yes, that's the one. Come on. With my infallible sense of direction, it shouldn't take us long to find it...

PERI:

No?

DOCTOR:

No. No more than a couple of hours at most...

(END)



OF CHAOS TIME THE

By Mark Ravenhill

THE DOCTOR

Space-time traveller.

PERI

The Doctor's companion.

MAYLON

A medic (M)

STANDING,

A medic (F)

TROBE

A patient suffering from time sickness (M)

WARMA

A scientist (M)

Also: **DROID, COMPUTER VOICE**

(Gender-wise, the guest cast can be played in whatever way works best to fit in with the other eps)

NOTE: The events in the script are in a scrambled chronology experienced from the Doctor's P.O.V. If you want follow the events in chronological order (as the other characters experience them) then read the scenes in this order: 4, 3, 6, 8, 5, 10, 9, 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 13.

DIRECTOR - NICHOLAS BRIGGS
SCRIPT EDITOR - JONATHAN MORRIS
PRODUCER - DAVID RICHARDSON
EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS - NICHOLAS BRIGGS
& JASON HAIGH-ELLERY
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(OPENING THEME)

1. INT. CORRIDOR.

(WE HEAR THE DOCTOR AND STANDING RUNNING, FIGHTING FOR BREATH, AS THEY ARE PURSUED BY SECURITY DROIDS, FIRING LASERS. THROUGHOUT THE STORY THE DOCTOR'S INTERNAL THOUGHTS ARE IN *ITALICS*)

DROID

Halt! The order for execution has been given. Halt!

(FX: A LASER WHINES THROUGH THE AIR AND BURNS THE WALL, INCHES FROM THE DOCTOR.)

DOCTOR

Ouch! That was too close for comfort! *Where am I?*

STANDING

Count yourself lucky. A new model would kill with the first shot. Come on!

(THE DOCTOR AND STANDING CONTINUE RUNNING, GETTING FURTHER AWAY FROM THE DROIDS)

DROID (INCREASINGLY DISTANT)

Escape is impossible. You will be executed. Halt!

DOCTOR

Running down a corridor? Very familiar. But I've never met this woman before in all my lives. I should be with Peri. What's going on?

STANDING

The launch chamber must be through here. We'll need to crack the security code.

DOCTOR

Now that's something I do know how to do.

(FX: LASER ZAP. DROIDS APPROACH)

STANDING

The droids are getting closer. Quick!

(FX: BEEPS AS THE DOCTOR RAPIDLY CRACKS THE KEY CODE ON THE DOOR)

DOCTOR

Standard technology for mid-period Gamma Nine. So are we-?

DROID (MUCH CLOSER)

Located. Execute!

STANDING

Down!

(FX: THE DOCTOR AND STANDING FALL TO THE FLOOR AS SEVERAL LASERS BURN THE FLOOR AND WALLS AROUND THEM)

STANDING

Too late! We're going to die!

DOCTOR

Not yet. I cracked the code.

(FX: THE DOOR HUMS OPEN)

DOCTOR

Well - don't just stand there like a startled letter box. Inside!

(THE DOCTOR AND STANDING ENTER THE ANTECHAMBER. THE DOOR HUMS SHUT BEHIND THEM)

2. INT. ANTECHAMBER

STANDING

The bomb's through there. But the launch computer should be located in this room. We need to find it and – where is it?

DOCTOR

(Bomb? Launch computer? If I only had some idea what she was talking about!)

(FX: LASERS BURNING THROUGH THE DOOR, WHICH CONTINUES THROUGHOUT)

STANDING

We have ninety seconds to stop that bomb being launched before the droids get through the door.

DOCTOR

Launch computer? Ah, here we are!

STANDING

Can you stop the launch?

DOCTOR

Well of course I can stop the launch.

(FX: THE DOCTOR STARTS PUNCHING AT A KEY PAD. THE KEY PAD EXPLODES IN A SHOWER OF SPARKS)

DOCTOR

Ah!

STANDING

Did you stop the launch?

DOCTOR

Afraid not. Self destruct mode kicked in to prevent re-programming.

STANDING

What are we going to do?

DOCTOR

Only one choice left to us. Go directly in to the bomb chamber and stop it at source.

STANDING

But that will be incredibly dangerous.

DOCTOR

Yes, it will. Up this service ladder. Come on!

(FX: THE DOCTOR AND STANDING START CLIMBING UP A METAL SERVICE LADDER. BELOW THEM THE DROIDS BURN THROUGH THE DOOR)

STANDING

They've broken through!

DROID

Escape is impossible. You will be executed – now.

(FX: THE DROIDS BEGIN TO FIRE UP AT THE DOCTOR AND STANDING)

DOCTOR

(STILL CLIMBING) Before we go in there I have to ask you a few questions. One: Who are you? Two: Where are we? And three: what are we doing?

STANDING

You're joking.

DOCTOR

Not at all. I have absolutely no idea what's going on.

(FX: DROID FIRES, HITS STANDING)

STANDING

Agh! Oh Doctor! You said were going to stop the bomb. But you're just another patient! Aaaah!

(STANDING FALLS OFF THE LADDER TO HER DEATH)

DOCTOR

Poor woman. If only I had some idea who she was.

(FX: A DISTORTED SWOOSH AS THE DOCTOR EXPERIENCES A TIME JUMP)

3. INT. CORRIDOR.

(THE DOCTOR, PERI AND MAYLON ARE WALKING DOWN A CORRIDOR)

MAYLON

I was a senior med in a city hospital, dealing with standard war victims, but then seven years ago the patient turned up, the survivor of a crashed shuttle craft.

DOCTOR

I see, yes. (*What's this? A time jump?*)

PERI

Are you alright Doctor?

DOCTOR

Perfectly well thank you. (*Peri! There you are. So. Definitely a time jump!*)

MAYLON

We'd never seen symptoms like it. But I was convinced that if we could only work out what it was he was suffering from it would somehow give us an advantage in the war effort.

PERI

Maylon, has the war been going on for a long time?

MAYLON

Almost a century. So many generations lost. We must do anything we can to stop it. I persuaded the war council to fund our study of the patient and to assign us a research lab on one of the outer islands.

DOCTOR

Can you describe the patient's symptoms?

MAYLON

I can do better than that, Doctor. I'll show you. He's inside this isolation chamber. If you look through the viewing screen...

(FX: MAYLON OPERATES A REMOTE CONTROL AND THE VIEWING SCREEN HUMS OPEN)

PERI

A baby! The patient's a baby!

MAYLON

For the moment, yes, but if you watch –

PERI

A toddler!

DOCTOR

Accelerated chronology. Fascinating. *(And something to do, no doubt, with my own distorted chronology!)*

PERI

A teenager now. He's in distress.

(FX: WE CAN DISTANTLY HEAR TROBE SCREAMING AND BANGING THE VIEWING SCREEN)

PERI

Can't you go in and comfort him?

MAYLON

The risk of infection would be too great.

DOCTOR

And you've found no underlying cause for the patient's condition?

MAYLON

Professor Standing and I have devoted the last seven years to this study. Nothing. It's completely beyond our understanding.

DOCTOR

But possibly not beyond mine.

MAYLON

You really think so Doctor?

PERI

As well as being the worst dressed man in all of time and space, the Doctor is also the most brilliant. Look at the patient now! He must be ninety.

MAYLON

That's about the end of his span.

PERI

But doesn't that mean he's about to die? I don't want to watch this.

DOCTOR

Die? I wouldn't be so sure, Peri.

(FX: WHOOSH OF TIME-LOOP, DIFFERENT TO TIME JUMP EFFECT)

PERI

A baby again!

DOCTOR

Accelerated chronology coupled with a time loop. Maylon, has there been any experiment with time technology as part of your war?

MAYLON

Nothing so far. Our scientists say that maybe in fifty years or so...

DOCTOR

I need to go inside that chamber and question the patient myself. (*If I can work out what's wrong with him, maybe I can work out what's wrong with me.*)

MAYLON

You can't go in there. The risk of chronological infection –

DOCTOR

Is minimal. I'm a Time Lord. (*Chronological infection? Is that what I'm suffering from?*)

MAYLON

Doctor, I won't let you through there.

PERI

Better open the door. The Doctor always gets what he wants.

(FX: SWOOSH OF A TIME JUMP)

4. INT. MAYLON'S OFFICE

MAYLON

How did you two get in here? This is a high security compound.

PERI

We landed here. In the TARDIS.

DOCTOR

(Ah! Another time jump. Presumably to an earlier point in time?)

MAYLON

If you're enemy spies, I'll shoot you without a second thought.

PERI

We're not spies. Or enemies. Put the gun away. The TARDIS detected some time distortions at this site and the Doctor wanted to investigate –

DOCTOR

(Time distortions? Well of course I wanted to investigate!) Now then tell me about these –

(FX: HUM OF A DOOR AS STANDING ENTERS)

STANDING

So it's true, Maylon. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw it on the scanner. Intruders.

DOCTOR

(Ah. This must be the first time we met. Before the security droid killed you, and before Maylon showed me the patient.)

MAYLON

I'm just questioning them now, Standing.

STANDING

Why waste time with questions? Shoot them straight away.

PERI

No!

STANDING

Obviously they're here to gather information about the patient. Well, if you're not going to do it, I will. Prisoners one and two, under the terms of war protocol, I declare you spies and as such subject to summary execution. I recommend you close your eyes as I –

DOCTOR

Wait! Wait! Maylon. Your patient. I think I know what he's suffering from.

(FX: SWOOSH OF A TIME JUMP)

5. INT. CORRIDOR. TIME CLINIC.

(THE DOCTOR, PERI AND MAYLON ARE RUNNING DOWN A CORRIDOR)

PERI

Quick, Maylon!

MAYLON (IN CONSIDERABLE PAIN)

I can't go any faster. My leg.

PERI

The TARDIS is just round the corner! Got your key Doctor?

DOCTOR

Of course. (*Or at least I hope I have*)

STANDING (ON TANNOY)

Doctor. Peri. This is your last warning. Surrender immediately or I will shoot on sight.

DOCTOR

Charming!

MAYLON

Standing's not a bad person.

PERI

Is that why she shot you in the leg?

MAYLON

Generations of war. It changes you.

STANDING (ON TANNOY)

Maylon, I now consider you a traitor. Surrender or be shot.

MAYLON

She can't!

DOCTOR

No? She sounds pretty determined to me. (THE DOCTOR GOES A FEW STEPS AHEAD OF THE OTHERS BUT COMES RAPIDLY BACK TO THEM) Get back!

PERI

What is it?

DOCTOR

She's in front of the TARDIS. Standing got there first.

MAYLON

But your machine is the only way we can get to the satellite and stop the Chronon bomb.

DOCTOR

(Another piece of the jigsaw. But I still can't see the whole picture. Think Doctor, think!)

MAYLON

I'm going to talk to Standing. We were very close for several years. She'll see sense.

PERI

No Maylon. She means what she says. She'll –

MAYLON (APPROACHING STANDING)

Standing, listen to me –

STANDING

Maylon, under the terms of war protocol, I declare you a traitor and as such subject to summary execution. I advise you to close your eyes as I –

MAYLON

No!

(FX: STANDING SHOOTS MAYLON AND HE FALLS DEAD)

PERI

Horrible. Doctor, she killed him.

STANDING (CALLS)

Doctor! Peri! I know you're there! Come out before I shoot you too!

PERI

What now Doctor? We can't get to the TARDIS. What are we going to do?

DOCTOR

Oh Peri, I wish I knew. Too many questions, not enough answers.

PERI

Doctor?

(FX: SWOOSH OF TIME JUMP)

6. INT. THE PATIENT'S ISOLATION CHAMBER.

(FX: GURGLING BABY)

DOCTOR

Hello there little fellow. *(Time jumped again. Right to the patient's bedside)*. Aren't you a pretty baby?

MAYLON (INTERCOM)

Doctor, I'm monitoring the situation closely and if there's any danger, please leave the isolation chamber as soon as I ask you.

DOCTOR

Understood.

PERI (INTERCOM)

Good luck, Doctor.

DOCTOR

Peri, someone of my capacious intelligence is hardly in need of luck!

(FX: BABY STOPS GURGLING, NOW SIX YEARS OLD)

DOCTOR

There we are, little fellow. You're growing up fast aren't you? I'm the Doctor. What's your name?

TROBE (SIX YEARS OLD)

I'm Trobe.

DOCTOR

And do you know why you're here, Trobe?

TROBE

Because I'm poorly.

DOCTOR

You have a chronological condition. Time sickness. Why's that?

TROBE

I don't know Doctor.

DOCTOR

But I think you do. Tell me about the bomb and the satellite.

TROBE

I don't know what you're talking about.

DOCTOR

Is it a Chronon bomb? Well? Is it?

TROBE

You're frightening me.

PERI (INTERCOM)

Go easy with him Doctor. He's only a kid.

DOCTOR

For now. But not for very much longer. Teenager now. See. Trobe - tell me about the time experiments.

TROBE (FOURTEEN)

I don't want to talk to you. I hate you. Get out of here.

DOCTOR

Trobe, you are caught in a time loop of accelerated chronology. I want to cure you. But I can only do that if I understand what caused it. I need you to tell me what you've been exposed to. So if you just start with the -

TROBE

No!

MAYLON (INTERCOM)

Doctor! He's entering the aggressive phase of his cycle! Get out of there!

DOCTOR

Not until he tells me everything he knows.

TROBE

Won't!

(TROBE LUNGES AT THE DOCTOR, PUSHES HIM AGAINST THE WALL AND BEGINS TO CHOKE HIM)

PERI (INTERCOM)

Maylon! Do something! He's going to kill the Doctor!

(FX: SWOOSH OF A TIME JUMP)

7. INT. THE TIME BOMB LAUNCH PLATFORM.

(FX: THE BOMB HUMS AND VIBRATES AS IT PREPARES TO LAUNCH)

DOCTOR

(Where am I now? Bomb launch chamber. Doctor, you need to find a way to stop that thing firing. By brute force if necessary.)

(FX: THE DOCTOR BEGINS TO POUND AT THE BOMB MOULDING WITH HIS FISTS, TRYING TO FIND A WAY TO GET INSIDE ITS MECHANISM)

WARMA (APPROACHING)

I wouldn't do that if I were you.

DOCTOR

And why not?

WARMA

Meddling with a bomb just before it launches is a dangerous business.

DOCTOR

But particularly when it's a Chronon bomb? Yes? This bomb – which is going to launch in (CHECKING SCREEN) forty three seconds – is a bomb which will scramble the enemy's chronology and so enable you to win the war! Am I right?

WARMA

Doctor, come out of the launch chamber. It's too dangerous –

DOCTOR

Dangerous? Why's that? Maybe because if I do this –

(FX: THE DOCTOR RIPS OFF A SECTION OF PANELLING FROM THE BOMB CASING)

DOCTOR

– I risk causing a time leak and exposing us both to chronological infection. Yes?

WARMA

Yes, Doctor. It's a Chronon bomb. Please don't harm yourself. Or me. Let the bomb launch. Let it end the war.

DOCTOR

I can't do that. I'm already suffering a temporal sickness. I'm jumping backwards and forwards on my own continuum, trying to work out what's going on with the patient and the bomb and you, who, as far as I'm concerned, I've only just met. Which tells me that at this moment I must open this bomb casing, I must cause a time leak, I must make myself suffer time sickness otherwise why else would I -?

WARMA

No!

(FX: WARMA LEAPS AT THE DOCTOR, TRYING TO PREVENT HIM OPENING THE CASING. THEY STRUGGLE)

WARMA

I can't let you do that Doctor. The bomb must launch even if it means killing you!

(FX: THE PHYSICAL STRUGGLE BETWEEN WARMA AND THE DOCTOR CONTINUES)

COMPUTER VOICE

Chronon bomb launching in 10, 9, 8 ...

(FX: SWOOSH OF TIME JUMP)

8. INT. THE PATIENT'S ISOLATION CHAMBER.

(TROBE LUNGES AT THE DOCTOR, PUSHES HIM AGAINST THE WALL AND BEGINS TO CHOKE HIM)

PERI (INTERCOM)

Maylon! Do something! He's going to kill the Doctor!

MAYLON (INTERCOM)

No. Look! Trobe's ageing! The Doctor's got the upper hand!

DOCTOR

That's the problem with accelerated chronology, Trobe. From the vigour of youth to middle aged spread in just a few seconds. Now – why don't you tell me about the Chronon bomb? Please. I want to cure you.

TROBE (FORTY YEARS OLD)

Everything I've done I've done for the glory of my –

DOCTOR

Yes, yes. Too late for jingoism now.

TROBE (FORTY YEARS OLD)

Alright, Doctor. Eight years ago a chief scientist called Warma asked to meet the war council on a matter of great urgency and utmost secrecy.

DOCTOR

He'd developed the technology for a bomb that could scramble time?

TROBE

Not entirely. He was at the very beginning of his experiments. But he saw that if we could destroy the enemy's chronology, wreck their continuum, then the war would finally come to an end. The council were concerned that his research should happen in total secrecy. So just Warma and I were dispatched to a deserted satellite station to research the time bomb project. All went well at first, great progress was made but then –

DOCTOR

Chronological illness.

TROBE (SIXTY YEARS OLD)

I hadn't appreciated at first how exposure to time modulation would affect me. I began to suffer from time related symptoms, minor at first. I warned Warma that he should stop the experiments -

DOCTOR

But he's a very determined man. Yes. I think I already met him. In the bomb launch chamber.

TROBE

The bomb launch chamber? How is that possible?

DOCTOR

I'm not altogether sure. But I'm beginning to understand. Please - continue.

TROBE (EIGHTY YEARS OLD)

As my condition grew worse, Warma locked me away. But one day, using the short window of adulthood in my time loop, I managed to get in to a shuttle craft and -

STANDING (INTERCOM)

Alright, Doctor, time you came out of there.

DOCTOR

Standing? How nice of you to join us. I'm just finishing a very illuminating chat with Trobe.

STANDING (INTERCOM)

I know. I've been listening to the whole thing. With Professor Maylon. And your friend Peri. We've had a disagreement. I'm convinced that the Chronon bomb's the only way to win the war and Maylon disagreed so things became agitated.

PERI (INTERCOM)

Doctor, Maylon's been shot in the leg.

TROBE (NINETY YEARS OLD)

Find a cure for me, Doctor. Please. Free me from this time loop.

DOCTOR

I will, Trobe. I promise. And cure myself. Because I've also contracted a chronological -

(FX: TIME-LOOP WHOOSH. BABY GURGLES)

DOCTOR

And so it goes full circle again. Alright, Standing, I'm coming out there.

(FX: SWOOSH OF TIME JUMP)

9. INT. TROBE'S LABORATORY, THE SATELLITE STATION.**WARMA**

Who are you? Speak now or I'll have the security droids execute you.

(FX: HUM OF SECURITY DROIDS MOVING IN TO A CIRCLE AROUND THE DOCTOR)

DROID

Weapon capability enabled.

DOCTOR

(Ah, this must be the first time we met.) I'm the Doctor and you I presume must be Warma.

WARMA

How did you get onto this satellite station? A shuttle craft would have been detected. Honest answers, Doctor. Or they'll shoot.

DROID

Taking aim.

(FX: DROIDS WEAPONS TAKE AIM ON THE DOCTOR)

DOCTOR

To be perfectly honest ...*(How did I get here? Standing was guarding the TARDIS. She shot Maylon and then Peri and I headed back the other way. Toward Trobe. So does that mean we -?)*

WARMA

Alright Doctor, I've waited long enough. Droids, prepare to execute!

DOCTOR

Wait! Wait! Warma, have you ever heard of Pandora's box?

WARMA

No. Is it a weapon?

DOCTOR

Far worse. You use one Chronon bomb, Warma -

WARMA

There is no Chronon bomb.

DOCTOR

You're lying! Use just one – and you'll change the entire course of history. However hard you try to stop them, others will get hold of your technology, destroy their enemies, themselves, and eventually you. And then what will have been the point of – ?

(FX: HUM OF DOOR OPENING)

STANDING

Doctor. I said you wouldn't get away from me.

DOCTOR

Standing! How did you get here?

STANDING

Followed you through the worm-hole, of course.

DOCTOR

(Wormhole? Wormhole!) Yes, of course you did.

STANDING

Warma, it's an honour to meet the great hero who will finally end the war.

WARMA

Are you here to save this man?

STANDING

Save the Doctor? No. The Doctor's a traitor who wants the war to –

DOCTOR

Traitor? Traitor! Why is every person in every galaxy I've ever heard use that word an idiot? You want to end this war, Standing. But Warma is setting the universe on course for hundreds, thousands of far deadlier wars that will go on forever until all of time is destroyed!

STANDING

No. There'll be a way to limit access to the Chronon bomb. Once the war is finished then –

WARMA

I've heard enough. The droids will execute you now. Standby.

(FX: DROIDS RAISE WEAPONS)

WARMA

Thank you Doctor. I was going to wait until I'd run the final tests. But you've inspired me to act more swiftly. I'm going to activate the Chronon bomb now.

DOCTOR

No!

WARMA

Only I will be alive to witness the launch of my weapon! Droids, when I give the order, execute them. Both of them.

DROID

Preparing for execution.

STANDING

Not me! I'm a loyal – you can't execute me!

(FX: A GREAT ROARING NOISE SOME WAY OFF. THE WHOLE ROOM SHAKES. WARMA FALLS TO THE FLOOR.)

STANDING (to DOCTOR)

What's that?

DOCTOR

At a guess, I'd say an unstable wormhole very close to implosion. Run, Standing!

STANDING

But I want Warma to understand –

DOCTOR

Now!

(FX: THE DOCTOR PUNCHES THE EXIT BUTTON AND HE AND STANDING RUN THROUGH THE DOOR. WARMA LEAPS TO HIS FEET)

WARMA

After them!

(FX: THE DROIDS HUM IN TO ACTION AS THEY PURSUE THE DOCTOR AND STANDING)

WARMA

They mustn't be allowed to stop the launch. The Chronon bomb will be fired in seven minutes!

(FX: WHOOSH OF A TIME JUMP)

10. INT. THE PATIENT'S SEALED CHAMBER.

(FX: GURGLE OF A BABY)

TROBE (AGED SIX)
Hello Doctor.

DOCTOR
(He remembers me!) Hello again Trobe.

PERI (INTERCOM)
Doctor, quick! It's only a matter of time before Standing realises we're not heading for the TARDIS anymore and comes after us with that gun. You said you had a plan. Something to do with all the equipment you've rigged up to Trobe.

DOCTOR
A plan? Yes! A plan! *(Think, think! It must be something to do with the wormhole. Yes! Got it!)*

PERI (INTERCOM)
Well?

DOCTOR
Trobe's condition has created a high level of time distortion. That's the energy that the TARDIS detected and which brought us here. If I can harness that energy, I can create a worm hole which will allow me to make the temporal/spatial leap in to the heart of the satellite and prevent Warma's time bomb project.

PERI (INTERCOM)
That's brilliant! Will it work?

DOCTOR
It has to work. Peri, it's not only Trobe who's suffering from a time sickness.

PERI (INTERCOM)
You mean you're going to age prematurely and then turn back into a baby?

DOCTOR
No, my sickness has taken on a different form due to the fact that I'm a Time Lord, and already exist in a special relationship with time.

PERI (INTERCOM)

So how has it affected you?

DOCTOR:

I've become displaced in time.

PERI (INTERCOM)

Displaced in time?

DOCTOR:

All these events that you've been experiencing in sequence have been to me like a jumbled dream. I've already been in the bomb launch chamber. I've already decided to expose myself to chronological infection.

PERI (INTERCOM)

And so you've seen how everything turns out?

DOCTOR

Not everything.

PERI (INTERCOM)

But enough to know that you're going to be OK?

(PAUSE)

PERI (INTERCOM)

Doctor?

DOCTOR

Trobe, this could be dangerous for both me and for you. Do you understand?

TROBE (FOURTEEN YEARS OLD)

I think so Doctor.

DOCTOR

Channelling your chronological condition will place a huge strain on your body. Any unexpected surge of temporal emissions could be enough to kill you.

TROBE (TWENTY YEARS OLD)

Anything it takes to stop Warma. I'd rather risk death than go on living like this.

DOCTOR

I understand. Ready to go Peri. Switch on the equipment.

PERI (INTERCOM)

Doctor, I'm not sure this is the best –

DOCTOR

No arguments Peri. Do it!

(FX: PERI OPERATES THE EQUIPMENT)

(PAUSE)

PERI (INTERCOM)

It's not working.

DOCTOR

It will Peri. Only a matter of time. I know that much. There are certain advantages to suffering from time sickness. There we are. Look!

(FX: SOUND OF THE WORMHOLE STARTING TO APPEAR, GROWS LOUDER DURING:)

DOCTOR

See that little point of light? The worm hole. Starting to open up. It'll soon be big enough to take me to the satellite. How are you Trobe?

TROBE (FORTY YEARS OLD)

Hurts.

DOCTOR

I'll be as quick as I can.

TROBE

Agh!

DOCTOR

Here we are. Time I was on my way.

STANDING (INTERCOM)

Doctor!

DOCTOR

Standing. I was wondering when you'd turn up.

STANDING (INTERCOM)

Get out of there, Doctor. Or will I have to come in and drag you out?

PERI (INTERCOM)

I won't let you do that.

STANDING

Stand aside Peri. I'll shoot you if I have to. Move!

DOCTOR

Better do as she says Peri.

PERI (INTERCOM)

But Doctor -

DOCTOR

Let her in!

(FX: ELECTRONIC HUM AS A DOOR OPENS AND STANDING COMES IN TO THE CHAMBER. THE SOUND OF THE WORM HOLE IS VERY LOUD NOW.)

STANDING

So - this is how you plan to get to the satellite. Then I'm coming with you.

DOCTOR

I wouldn't advise that.

STANDING

Advise? I don't think you're in any position to advise when I'm the one holding the gun.

DOCTOR

Ah but I have something more powerful than a gun.

STANDING

Which is -?

DOCTOR

Foresight. If you follow me to that satellite station you'll be killed by Warma's security droids.

STANDING

I don't believe you.

DOCTOR

You're walking towards your own death.

TROBE (EIGHTY YEARS OLD)

Doctor! Pain so great now. Not sure how much longer I can

-

DOCTOR

Peri, if I'm not back in nine minutes, switch off the equipment.

PERI (INTERCOM)

But that'll -

DOCTOR

Do as I say! Anymore and it'll kill Trobe.

(FX: THE DOCTOR STEPS IN TO THE WORM HOLE AND IS SUCKED AWAY)

STANDING

You're not getting away from me that easily, Doctor.

(FX: STANDING IS SWEEPED IN TO THE WORM HOLE AND IS SUCKED AWAY.)

FX: WHOOSH OF A TIME JUMP)

11. INT. BOMB LAUNCH CHAMBER.

COMPUTER VOICE

Chronon bomb launching in 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3-

DOCTOR

Agh!

(FX: THE DOCTOR IS STRUGGLING WITH WARMA. HE PUSHES WARMA AWAY FROM HIM AND RUNS TOWARDS THE BOMB, TEARING AT ITS CASING)

WARMA

Doctor - no!

(FX: THE DOCTOR RIPS OFF THE CASING OF THE BOMB. A SHOWER OF BANGS AND SPARKS)

COMPUTER VOICE

3, 3, 3, 3, 3... (ETC REPEATS THROUGHOUT:)

DOCTOR

There! I've stopped the launch!

WARMA

But you've ripped off the core casing. Which means -

(FX: HISSING, ROARING SOUND BUILDING AS THE TIME LEAK BUILDS THROUGHOUT. BOTH VOICES SLOW DOWN/CHOPPED UP/DISTORT:)

WARMA

You've released huge amounts of temporal energy.

DOCTOR

It was the only thing I -

WARMA

- ripped off the core casing - which means -

DOCTOR

- only thing I -

WARMA

- ripped off the core casing - which means-

DOCTOR

It's starting. Chronological destruction!

(FX: BUILDING ROAR OF THE TIME LEAK)

12. INT. TROBE'S CHAMBER.

TROBE (FOURTEEN YEARS OLD)

Aaaaagh!

PERI (INTERCOM)

Try to hold on Trobe! The Doctor won't be much longer.
(MUTTERS) I hope.

TROBE

I can't stand it any longer.

PERI (INTERCOM)

But we've got to give the Doctor a chance to get back.

TROBE (TWENTY YEARS OLD)

Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaghhhh!!

(FX: THE ENERGY OF THE WORM HOLE BEGINS TO DIMINISH)

PERI (INTERCOM)

The worm hole's closing. Nine minutes, almost done. Come on, Doctor, come on!

DOCTOR (DISTANT)

Peri!

PERI (INTERCOM)

Yes! The Doctor's coming back, Trobe. Just a few seconds more.

(FX: THE DOCTOR STAGGERS OUT OF THE WORMHOLE, FALLING TO HIS KNEES)

DOCTOR

Switch it off, Peri! Switch it off!

(FX: PERI SWITCHES OFF THE EQUIPMENT. WE HEAR THE WORM HOLE FADE AWAY AND CLOSE)

DOCTOR (OVERCOME WITH EXHAUSTION)

Ugh!

PERI (INTERCOM)

Doctor. Get out of there.

(FX: PERI OPERATES THE DOOR CONTROLS FOR THE CHAMBER)

13. INT. OBSERVATION AREA OUTSIDE TROBE'S CHAMBER.

(WE HEAR THE DOCTOR COLLAPSE CHOKING TO THE FLOOR)

PERI

Doctor are you ok?

(PAUSE)

PERI

Doctor?

(PAUSE)

PERI

Doctor! Say something. Please!

(PAUSE)

PERI (THINKING HE'S DEAD)

Oh no, Doctor.

DOCTOR

Tears Peri? You really are – like so many Americans – prone to inordinate sentimentality.

PERI

Oh. You're being obnoxious. Thank goodness. Back to normal.

DOCTOR

A little battered and beaten. But as you say, yes, back to my usual self.

PERI

Is your time sickness cured?

DOCTOR

Yes, I think so.

PERI

But how?

DOCTOR

The huge amounts of chronological energy I released when I dismantled the bomb trapped Warma in a perpetual time loop. I, on the other hand, appear to have been cured by the same release of energy.

PERI

But wasn't that what caused your sickness?

DOCTOR

It was. Both the cause and the cure. The same event experienced twice cancelled itself out. That's the fascinating thing about distorted chronologies - they throw up the most incredible paradoxes.

PERI

I think I sort of understand that.

TROBE (NINETY YEARS OLD ON, INTERCOM)

Doctor.

DOCTOR

Trobe.

PERI

That didn't happen before. He must be at least a hundred years old.

TROBE (A HUNDRED YEARS OLD)

Thank you Doctor. Released. Time loop has stopped and now I can... (FINAL BREATH)

(PAUSE)

PERI

Is he dead?

DOCTOR

Yes. No more growing up, growing old, round and round, backwards and forwards. He got what he wanted. An ending. Come on Peri. Time we were on our way.

(CLOSING THEME)



AN EYE FOR MURDER

BY UNA MCCORMACK

Characters:

THE DOCTOR

A Time Lord

PERI

An assistant

DOCTOR PETHERBRIDGE (F) -

The principal of a women's college at an ancient university,
60

DOCTOR RUTH HORWITZ (F) -

Physicist, a Jewish émigrée from Vienna with excellent, if
accented, English, 27

DOCTOR JOAN DALTON (F) -

A communist, 30

DOCTOR MARIA BACKHOUSE (F) -

A fascist, 40

POLICEMAN

DIRECTOR - NICHOLAS BRIGGS

SCRIPT EDITOR - JONATHAN MORRIS

PRODUCER - DAVID RICHARDSON

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS - NICHOLAS BRIGGS

& JASON HAIGH-ELLERY

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(OPENING THEME)

1: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM (SCR), ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: CRACKLE OF A FIRE. SOFT MUSIC ON THE WIRELESS. TEACUPS CLATTER AGAINST SAUCERS; CHATTER. THE ATMOSPHERE IS WARM AND SECLUDED, WITH THE POTENTIAL TO BE CLAUSTROPHOBIC. CREAK OF AN ARMCHAIR AS BACKHOUSE TAKES THE SEAT OPPOSITE PETHERBRIDGE.

BACKHOUSE:

'Death is an Inconvenience'... Good heavens, principal, I shouldn't think that kind of thing customarily forms part of your reading!

PETHERBRIDGE:

On the contrary, a puzzle or two keeps the mind ticking over. You spend too much time amongst the Romans, Maria. A little lighter reading might leaven them.

BACKHOUSE:

I'm happy enough in the company of Cicero. (READS AUTHOR'S NAME) By Perry Medlock... What kind of a name is that?

PETHERBRIDGE:

Back in the day she was Susan Perry. An unmemorable young woman. No money, so it was either thrillers or marriage. I daresay thrillers have proven more financially rewarding than motherhood ever could.

BACKHOUSE:

Oh, she was one of ours?

PETHERBRIDGE:

It seems so. She's coming to tea next week. Back in the country after a stint in California. I might have her address the undergraduates. You should come along. See what the modern woman is like.

BACKHOUSE:

Not for me, although I wish her every success with her, er, work. Such a shame she's obliged to write under a man's name.

PETHERBRIDGE:

It's a man's world, Dr Backhouse.

2: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS, ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: A COLD, HIGH-CEILINGED SPACE. NO FIRE. A CLOCK TICKS ON THE MANTELPIECE. LOW-LEVEL ELECTRICAL HUM THROUGHOUT. CLUNK OF AN ADDING MACHINE. A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

HORWITZ:

(TO HERSELF) Ssh... Not now...

FX: CLUNK OF MACHINE.

DALTON:

(BEYOND THE DOOR) Ruth? Are you there?

FX: DOOR OPENS.

DALTON:

Ruth! There you are!

FX: MACHINE STOPS ABRUPTLY; HUM CONTINUES.

HORWITZ:

(CONCENTRATION LOST) Oh, what is it, Dr Dalton? What do you want?

DALTON:

I didn't see you at supper.

HORWITZ:

You didn't see me because I wasn't there.

DALTON:

Haven't you eaten?

HORWITZ:

I am trying to work! That is our purpose here, is it not?

DALTON:

Yes, but I don't think starvation is obligatory.

HORWITZ:

No, but concentration is.

DALTON:

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to disturb you. I wanted to make sure that you were well. You've been very quiet these past few days.

HORWITZ:

I've a great deal on my mind.

DALTON:

You've... not received another one, have you?

HORWITZ:

I don't want to talk about that. Was there anything else, Joan?

DALTON:

Well, there is something...

HORWITZ:

Yes?

DALTON:

(SMALL LAUGH) I can't help feeling you're avoiding me!

HORWITZ:

(UNCONVINCING) Of course I'm not. I'm very busy and I want to be left in peace.

DALTON:

You work too hard.

HORWITZ:

I work because it matters.

DALTON:

I could help, you know...

(FX: CLUNK OF THE ADDING MACHINE)

HORWITZ:

Could you leave, please, Joan?

DALTON:

All you have to do is say. You know I can help--

HORWITZ:

It's quite impossible--

DALTON:

It's not impossible. (HARDENING) Think carefully, Ruth. There's a choice coming for all of us, you know. You don't want to pick unwisely.

(MACHINE STOPS BRIEFLY, THEN PICKS UP AGAIN)

HORWITZ:

(WITH DIGNITY) You may leave, now, Dr Dalton. I have made my choices. I'll live with them.

3: EXT. THE MAIN COURT, ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: THE CALM OF A PLACE OF LEARNING. BICYCLE BELLS THE STREET BEYOND. A CAR PASSES AND RECEDES INTO THE DISTANCE. A TOWER CLOCK CHIMES QUARTER-TO. UNDERNEATH, THE STEADY BEEPITY-BEEP OF AN ENERGY SOURCE BEING TRACKED.

DOCTOR:

Nice enough for you, Peri?

PERI:

It's OK. I was expecting something more... gothic? I mean, sure, it's grand, but I thought these places were older. Mediaeval?

DOCTOR:

Not the women's colleges.

PERI:

Oh, I see. Keep the girls out as long as you can, and when you do let them in, put them where you can't see them. Still, at least the clothes are practical, if a little tweedy.

DOCTOR:

Tweedy? I'll have you know this London drape suit is the height of fashion... I could grow to like it.

PERI:

Well it makes a change from your usual explosion in a paint factory, I'll give you that.

FX: THE BEEPS BECOME SLIGHTLY MORE URGENT.

DOCTOR:

These energy readings are definitely stronger...

PERI:

And not what you'd expect from Earth in nineteen thirty-nine?

DOCTOR:

Assuredly not! From over in that block I'd say...

PERI:

I wonder if you can get a cup of coffee around here...

FX: CRUNCH OF GRAVEL AS PETHERBRIDGE APPROACHES.

DOCTOR:

The coffee? Is that all you can think about? Really, Peri--

PETHERBRIDGE:

Miss Perry? The porter said you were here. But, my dear girl, I wasn't expecting you for days!

PERI:

Ah...

DOCTOR:

(THINKING FAST) We caught an earlier train.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Well, how marvellous! Welcome back to St. Ursula's! I see you've brought a... gentleman friend with you?

PERI:

You know, I think there's been--

PETHERBRIDGE:

Good gracious, you sound decidedly transatlantic! I suppose Hollywood might have that effect... Dear girl, I'm keen to hear your stories – and we have quite a story of our own. I think you might find it rather intriguing.

PERI:

Oh, no--

PETHERBRIDGE:

(MOVING OFF) Come along! Tea is at four. Promptly.

PERI:

(WHISPERS) Doctor!

DOCTOR:

(SOTTO) Don't say a word. If we're inside, I can track down whatever's causing the energy anomaly.

PERI:

(SOTTO) But she thinks I'm someone I'm not!

DOCTOR:

(SOTTO) Happens to the best of us. Don't you want to hear her story?

PERI:

(SOTTO) No!

DOCTOR:

Well, I do. You'll be fine! Play it by ear. Now hurry up!
Tea's at four. Promptly.

FX: CRUNCH OF GRAVEL.

PERI:

What do they do to you if you're late?

4: INT. PETHERBRIDGE'S ROOMS, ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: CLINK OF CUPS ON SAUCERS, TEASPOONS AGAINST CHINA.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Although, I must say, I wasn't entirely convinced by the scene near the end.

PERI:

The which?

PETHERBRIDGE:

The denouement in the cathedral.

PERI:

I'm... sorry it didn't work for you.

DOCTOR:

Dr Petherbridge, I entirely agree. I told Perry when I read it – Perry, I said, you have to *earn* a scene like that.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Quite.

PERI:

But, you have a story of your own, Dr Petherbridge?

PETHERBRIDGE:

Yes, indeed. Rather a sordid one.

DOCTOR:

(CURIOUS) Oh?

PETHERBRIDGE:

I must stress that I'm telling you this in the strictest confidence.

PERI:

Of course--

PETHERBRIDGE:

I trust you implicitly. But I'm afraid I don't know your... companion?

DOCTOR:

What? Who? Me? I assure you, ma'am, my lips are sealed!

PETHERBRIDGE:

I'll hold you to that. (TO PERI) I'm almost embarrassed... But it seems one of our number has taken it upon herself to express her distaste towards another of us in a most vicious and unappealing manner.

PERI:

What do you mean?

PETHERBRIDGE:

A series of unpleasant communications. All anonymous.

PERI:

Poison pen letters?

PETHERBRIDGE:

Indeed.

DOCTOR:

Directed towards the same person? Who?

PETHERBRIDGE:

The unfortunate Dr Horwitz. A gifted physicist, but one who has suffered a great deal of personal misfortune.

DOCTOR:

Such are the times we live in.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Quite. But in a small community such as ours, these things can be corrosive.

PERI:

Have you spoken to the police?

PETHERBRIDGE:

Good heavens, no! It's imperative this remains within college! Imagine what would happen if word got around. Those women, such harpies...

PERI:

That's awful!

PETHERBRIDGE:

So you'll look into the matter while you're here?

PERI:

I'm not sure it would be appropriate --

DOCTOR:

Nonsense, Peri! I'm always saying to her, Dr Petherbridge, she needs to keep living life if her books are to maintain their freshness. Of course we'll take the case!

PERI:

Oh, great...

PETHERBRIDGE:

(TO PERI) It's not usual, you know, to have men stay--

DOCTOR:

Don't think of me as a man... just the Doctor.

PETHERBRIDGE:

My dear man, we're all doctors.

PERI:

Think of him as my assistant. He's a dab hand at typing.

DOCTOR:

Peri...

PERI:

We kind of come as a package, Dr Petherbridge.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Oh, very well. I suppose we can find a corner... He's not to wander about though.

PERI:

You got that, Doctor? Don't go wandering off. Well, I guess I ought to talk to Dr Horwitz.

DOCTOR:

And while you're doing that, what do you suggest I do?

PERI:

Make yourself useful. Go and type something.

5: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

FX: DOOR OPENS, PERI AND HORWITZ ENTER.

HORWITZ:

Will this take long?

PERI:

Not long.

HORWITZ:

The letters speak for themselves.

PERI:

May I see them?

HORWITZ:

Miss Perry, they are not an edifying sight--

PERI:

Still, I might learn something. Fresh pair of eyes?

HORWITZ:

Oh very well...

FX: HORWITZ CROSSES TO HER DESK.

PERI:

How long have you been getting them?

FX: RUSTLE OF PAPERS AS HORWITZ SORTS THROUGH.

HORWITZ:

About two months. Maybe three.

PERI:

Three months? That's a long time! You've kept them all?

HORWITZ:

I threw the first two on the fire. It seemed the most appropriate response.

FX: HORWITZ CROSSES BACK TO PERI WHO RUSTLES THROUGH THE LETTERS.

PERI:

These are vile! These cartoons!

HORWITZ:

Miss Perry, it may be your privilege to ignore such things, but any Jew knows that such outrages are quite commonplace, and they are not confined to those parts of Europe where Herr Goebbels now controls the airwaves.

PERI:

I'm sorry.

HORWITZ:

If this is all you need I'll get back to work.

PERI:

Sure... What is your work?

HORWITZ:

It's very complicated to explain and even then I doubt you would understand.

PERI:

I bet... Can I keep the letters for a while?

HORWITZ:

By all means. I hardly wish to have them in my possession.

6: EXT. THE MAIN COURT, ST. URSULA'S COLLEGE.

FX: THE BEEPS OF THE ENERGY TRACKING DEVICE.

DOCTOR:

(TO HIMSELF) There's definitely something going on over there...

FX: CRUNCH OF GRAVEL.

DALTON:

What on earth are you doing?

DOCTOR:

What?

DALTON:

And who are you exactly?

DOCTOR:

Well, who are you?

DALTON:

I'm Dr Joan Dalton, fellow of St. Ursula's – and I'm asking the questions. Who are you?

DOCTOR:

I am the Doctor.

DALTON:

Yes, well, everyone hereabouts is a doctor--

DOCTOR:

You don't happen to know anything about dark vacuum energy fluctuations, do you?

DALTON:

No--

DOCTOR:

Well, what use are you to me, then?

DALTON:

I do know a great deal about theoretical strategies to stimulate full employment.

DOCTOR:

Ah! An economist! Bad luck.

DALTON:

Yes, a genuine misfortune. You haven't explained who you are and what you're doing wandering around a women's college.

DOCTOR:

Well, I'm Miss Perry's assistant, of course!

DALTON:

Ah, our famous scribe! You're her... what did you say?

DOCTOR:

Her assistant. I'm quite the dab hand with the typewriter.

DALTON:

Her typist? Good grief, the revolution's finally begun. Well, Doctor whoever you are, allow me to accompany you back to your machine.

DOCTOR:

Really, I can find my own way...

DALTON:

I'm thinking of the undergraduates, you understand. They're so young, and reputation is such a fragile thing...

DOCTOR:

Oh, very well...

FX: THEY WALK AWAY.

7: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM.

PERI:

I'm sorry to disturb your day, Dr Backhouse.

BACKHOUSE:

I hope I can help. We're all appalled at this business and anxious to have the perpetrator exposed.

PERI:

All but one of you.

BACKHOUSE:

I beg your pardon?

PERI:

Well, one of you has been sending the letters.

BACKHOUSE:

Ah! Well, whoever she is, the rest of us want rid. If word got out, this could destroy the reputation of the college. No wonder they withhold degrees from us. Such a... womanish thing to do!

PERI:

Excuse me?

BACKHOUSE:

Anywhere else it would be resolved by a simple fistfight. But not amongst women!

PERI:

You know, I'm not going to get into that.

BACKHOUSE:

I started your book.

PERI:

Oh yeah? Which one?

BACKHOUSE:

'Last Trumpet'.

PERI:

(BUSKING IT) That's the one with the, er...

BACKHOUSE:

The intrigues within the orchestra are very well observed.

PERI:

(FINDING HER STRIDE) Oh, that one! Yeah, small groups of people can get intense like that. Particularly when they're stuck together.

BACKHOUSE:

Quite. I'm intrigued by your investigator. Dashing, aristocratic, somewhat tormented... Is this your ideal of virility, Miss Perry? Or does he play a part that you wish you might play, if this world were fairer towards our sex?

PERI:

He's more complicated than that. So you don't know any reason why Ruth Horwitz would receive this kind of attention?

BACKHOUSE:

The reason's perfectly clear. Dr Horwitz is a Jewess.

PERI:

I'm sorry? You mean she deserves these letters?

BACKHOUSE:

Now, I didn't say that! I gather you've been in America. Europe has changed. We live in divided times. Some people would be happy to see us more divided. Have you spoken to Dr Dalton?

PERI:

No, I haven't.

FX: BACKHOUSE RISES FROM CHAIR.

BACKHOUSE:

When you do, ask her about her politics. Ask her whose side she's on.

8: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM, LATER.

FX: QUIET CONVERSATION; SOME WIRELESS MUSIC. MOST OF THE FELLOWS ARE PRESENT, BUT THE MOOD IS MUTED.

DOCTOR:

... And the wretched woman marched me – marched me! – back to my room and lurked outside until I started typing!

PERI:

I wish I'd seen that... Which one was it?

DOCTOR:

That one, over there. Dalton. Thanks to whom I've found out nothing more about these energy readings. I have, however, decided to write a novel. Only a minor one, but--

PERI:

So that's Dalton? I've heard a lot about her.

DOCTOR:

Nothing good, I imagine.

PERI:

Well, no, Dr Backhouse all but said she was a Nazi--

PETHERBRIDGE:

(APPROACHING) Miss Perry, a word?

DOCTOR:

Shall I return to my typing?

PETHERBRIDGE:

You may stay, Doctor. This concerns you. (TO PERI) Miss Perry, I must insist your companion exercises some restraint.

PERI:

What's he been up to?

DOCTOR:

I only went for a walk!

PETHERBRIDGE:

(TO PERI) I must remind you that this is a women's college...

PERI:

Of course, principal. Doctor – best you keep to your room from now on.

DOCTOR:

And how, if I am banished to my garret, am I supposed to get on with investigating--

PERI:

We'll think of something!

FELLOW:

Could you quieten down, please?

FX: WIRELESS TURNED UP. IN THE BACKGROUND, OUTSIDE, AND OVER THIS, THE TOWER CLOCK SOFTLY CHIMES QUARTER-PAST.

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN:

I am speaking to you from the Cabinet Room of 10 Downing Street. This morning, the British Ambassador in Berlin handed the German government a final note, stating that unless we heard from them by 11 o'clock that they were prepared at once to withdraw their troops from Poland, a state of war would exist between us. I have to tell you now that no such undertaking has been received and that, consequently, this country is at war with Germany...

FX: WIRELESS TURNED OFF. BRIEF SILENCE.

DALTON:

That ghastly little man, Hitler!

BACKHOUSE:

I suppose you'd prefer Comrade Joe– [Stalin]

DALTON:

Better him than Hitler, Maria!

PETHERBRIDGE:

Ladies! Enough!

(BEAT)

PETHERBRIDGE (cont'd):

We have our differences, yes, but beyond that is our duty towards the young women in our care. We must be mindful of what this means for them, for their fathers and for their brothers. I shall have no quarrelling at a time like this.

PERI:

(SOFTLY) Doctor. I didn't realize. So this is how it all starts...

DOCTOR:

Yes. This is a different world now, Peri.

9: INT. PERI'S ROOMS.

FX: SEMI-COMPETENT TAPPING ON A TYPEWRITER.

PERI:

Are you going to play with that all night?

DOCTOR:

I'm putting down my notes, as any good detective should.

PERI:

What notes? What have we learned? You've been holed up in here all day and I've hardly spoken to anyone since the morning. As if they all suddenly have something else on their minds--

DOCTOR:

We've learned Dalton is a communist.

PERI:

Have we?

DOCTOR:

And we've learned Backhouse isn't.

PERI:

How does that help us?

FX: TYPEWRITER BELL RINGS.

DOCTOR:

I'm not sure, yet. But it's interesting. And if it's interesting, chances are it's important.

FX: KNOCK ON DOOR.

HORWITZ:

(FROM OUTSIDE) Miss Perry, are you there?

PERI:

Of course - come in!

FX: DOOR OPENS.

HORWITZ:

I am very sorry to disturb you... (SOBS)

PERI:

Ruth, are you all right? Come and sit down – what happened?

HORWITZ:

(CONTROLLING HERSELF, BUT DISTRESSED) Somebody came to my room. Came up behind me while I was working... Miss Perry, they tried to kill me!

MUSIC: TRANSITIONAL.

10: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

DOCTOR:

So you're always here in the evening, Dr Horwitz?

HORWITZ:

I'm here all the time.

DOCTOR:

Working?

HORWITZ:

That's correct.

PERI:

So everyone in college would know to find her here. No big secret.

DOCTOR:

Hmm. You were sitting at your desk? You didn't see your assailant enter?

HORWITZ:

I was not at my desk. I was looking for some papers in the cabinet. My back was to the door. I heard the door open, I turned, and... I made a dash for it.

PERI:

You didn't see who it was?

HORWITZ:

I... didn't have time. Their face... was covered. But I understood their intent. I left at once!

FX: THE BEEPS OF THE ENERGY TRACKER — MORE URGENT THAN EVER BEFORE.

PERI:

(SOTTO) Doctor?

DOCTOR:

(SOTTO) Almost off the scale now...

HORWITZ:

Whatever is that?

FX: DEVICE IS SWITCHED OFF.

DOCTOR:

Oh, nothing... Dr Horwitz, there's only one way out of this room. How did you elude your would-be assassin?

HORWITZ:

I was lucky...

DOCTOR:

Lucky?

HORWITZ:

If one is in fear for one's life, one gains a certain strength. I pushed past and fled.

DOCTOR:

I see...

PERI:

Dr Horwitz... Ruth, this has gone beyond poison pen letters now. Has someone been hassling you? Was it Dr Dalton?

HORWITZ:

Dalton? What makes you ask me about her?

DOCTOR:

We know about her political leanings.

PERI:

What did she do, Ruth?

HORWITZ:

Joan... was keen to recruit me... I said no, of course!

PERI:

(TO THE DOCTOR) Do we call the police, Doctor?

DOCTOR:

As a matter of courtesy we should leave that decision to Dr Petherbridge.

11: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM.

DALTON:

Oh, this is preposterous!

PETHERBRIDGE:

You don't deny you attempted to suborn Dr Horwitz?

DALTON:

'Suborn' is a rather loaded word--

PERI:

We know you approached her.

DALTON:

Of course I did! I spoke to her about my beliefs. I attempted to discover whether she was supportive--

DOCTOR:

Never mind that! Did you write those letters?

DALTON:

Certainly not! What possible reason would I have? And so disgustingly cowardly!

DOCTOR:

Perhaps you thought Dr Horwitz's work might have some military application?

PERI:

Here's what we think happened. You tried to gain access to her work, and she refused you – despite those horrible letters. So you tried to take her work by force.

DALTON:

(HESITATION) You remember we're at war with the Nazis, not the Soviet Union?

PETHERBRIDGE:

I recall there is a non-aggression pact in place between those two powers. I'm sorry, Dr Dalton, this is now a matter for the authorities.

FX: PETHERBRIDGE PICKS UP THE PHONE.

DALTON:

Principal, I have done nothing wrong!

PETHERBRIDGE:

Operator, would you put me through to the police. Thank you.

12: INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM.

FX: OUTSIDE, CLANG OF THE BELL OF A THIRTIES POLICE CAR.

PETHERBRIDGE:

I hope that's the last we hear of this. Miss Perry, Doctor, I'm grateful for your help – and for your continued discretion.

DOCTOR:

We wouldn't dream of breathing a word.

PETHERBRIDGE:

I should speak to the fellows... Oh, what a dreadful episode!

FX: DOOR OPENS; HORWITZ BURSTS IN.

HORWITZ:

What's this I hear about Dr Dalton?

PETHERBRIDGE:

I'm glad to say Dr Dalton is now in the care of the police--

HORWITZ:

No, no! Not Joan. There's been a misunderstanding--

PETHERBRIDGE:

Miss Perry, perhaps you could accompany Dr Horwitz back to her rooms? This has been a most distressing evening for her.

PERI:

Come on, Ruth. Let's get some cocoa and get you to bed.

13: INT. HALLWAY.

FX: FOOTSTEPS AS THEY RETURN TO HORWITZ'S ROOM.

PERI:

Why do you think there's been a mistake? Is there something else going on? To do with your work?

HORWITZ:

I... can't speak about that. (SUDDEN; QUIETER) Ssh!

PERI:

What is it?

HORWITZ:

(SOFT) The door to my room is open.

PERI:

Don't you leave it locked--?

FX: DOOR PUSHED OPEN SLOWLY.

PERI:

Good grief! Someone's done a thorough job here!

HORWITZ:

Everything is gone...

PERI:

Are you sure?

HORWITZ:

Of course I'm sure! My notes! My work! Everything! All gone!

14: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

DOCTOR:

Well, Dr Horwitz. Let me tell you what I know, and then you can consider whether you might offer me some explanations. I know you can't have escaped from your assailant via that door. I also know...

FX: SWITCHES ON THE ENERGY TRACKER – THE BEEPS ARE HECTIC NOW.

DOCTOR (cont'd):

That something in this room is causing dark vacuum fluctuations that are almost off the scale.

HORWITZ:

There is nothing I can tell you.

PERI:

Ruth, you can trust us. Honestly.

HORWITZ:

(SOME HESITATION) When I was a girl, my grandmother gave me a family heirloom, a strange little object that refracted light beautifully. Imagine what a child made of such a thing!

DOCTOR:

Ah, yes. I think I begin to see...

HORWITZ:

I was not the kind of child to call this magic. No, I wanted to understand. So I studied physics, in particular the properties of light, to better understand the nature of this gift.

DOCTOR:

Do you still have a drawing of this artefact, at least?

HORWITZ:

I can sketch it...

FX: SHUFFLE OF PAPER.

HORWITZ (cont'd):

I found, as I studied it closely, that it had many unusual powers.

DOCTOR:

Let me guess. Invisibility?

PERI:

Invisibility?

HORWITZ:

You're very sharp! Only small items. The second door over there – through which I escaped earlier – is the largest area I have been able to conceal thus far.

FX: PAPER RIPS.

HORWITZ (cont'd):

Here. This is what the artefact looks like.

PERI:

Eeuw! That's creepy! It's like an eye, staring at me!

DOCTOR:

Unsurprisingly, Peri, since that's what it is. An alien eye. Petrified, I imagine, to have survived so long.

PERI:

Not the only thing to be petrified round here...

DOCTOR:

You found, of course, that the effect was temporary. And unstable.

HORWITZ:

Yes. Most vexing.

DOCTOR:

So if I tried now to touch the door you used to escape...

FX: CRUMBLING, LIKE SAND COLLAPSING THROUGH A HUGE TIMER

PERI:

Doctor, it's crumbling away!

DOCTOR:

Not ideal for the applications you had in mind.

HORWITZ:

No, not in the least.

PERI:

What do you mean?

DOCTOR:

Think about it, Peri. This world is at war – the most mechanized, technologized war it has hitherto suffered.

HORWITZ:

Imagine if an ocean convoy could conceal itself. A fleet of aeroplanes. A whole invading army.

PERI:

Can you do that?

HORWITZ:

No, but I will, one day.

DOCTOR:

And, in the meantime, you've attracted considerable attention. Not least from Dalton and her comrades.

HORWITZ:

About Dalton--

FX: DOOR OPEN.

PETHERBRIDGE:

More news, I'm afraid. I called the fellows together, but one of them is missing. Dr Backhouse is nowhere to be found.

PERI:

Could Dalton have got to her?

HORWITZ:

No, wait, listen...

PETHERBRIDGE:

A car was seen leaving college about half an hour ago--

HORWITZ:

Pay attention! Joan Dalton tried to recruit me, yes, but it is not Joan Dalton that has been blackmailing me, and it is not Joan Dalton that threatened my family in Vienna with arrest and torture. Joan Dalton is a communist, yes, but Maria Backhouse is a Nazi!

DOCTOR:

And long gone! Dr Petherbridge, I'm afraid we will need to call on the assistance of the police again.

15. POLICE CAR.

FX: POLICE CAR DRIVES THROUGH RAIN, BELL CLANGING. CROSS-FADE TO INTERIOR... RAIN HEAVY ON THE WINDSCREEN.

DOCTOR:

Left – no, right! No, second right! She'll be heading for the coast!

POLICEMAN:

Any idea which coast, sir?

FX: THE BEEPS ON THE TRACKER START TO LESSEN IN INTENSITY.

DOCTOR:

Strange... Could the eye be losing some of its power...?

16: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

FX: POLICE CAR BELL RECEDING.

PERI:

I guess we can leave this to the Doctor and the boys in blue.
Let's get that cup of cocoa going.

PETHERBRIDGE:

I think we've earned something stronger!

17: POLICE CAR.

FX: THE TRACKER IS EVEN WEAKER; THE RAIN HEAVIER.

DOCTOR:

It can't lose power so quickly... Wait a moment... Of course! How... inexpressibly, inexcusably and quite uncharacteristically stupid of me! Turn the car around! Right now!

POLICEMAN:

What's that, sir?

DOCTOR:

Backhouse isn't in that car! She still at St. Ursula's!

18: INT. HORWITZ'S ROOMS.

FX: CLINK OF GLASSES.

PETHERBRIDGE:

To a nasty problem solved – and without any scandal.

PERI:

I hope so...

HORWITZ:

Something is troubling you?

PERI:

Just that... we found Backhouse very easily. I thought she'd put up more of a fight... Oh, perhaps I'm over-worrying it...

FX: ROOM GOES QUIET. WINDOW RATTLES. UNDERNEATH, SOMEONE IS BREATHING.

HORWITZ:

Miss Perry. There is someone else here.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Nonsense!

PERI:

Ssh! Listen!

(BEAT)

FX: FOOTSTEPS SHUFFLING ON FLOOR.

HORWITZ:

She's here! She's been here all along!

PERI:

She's using the eye to make herself invisible!

PETHERBRIDGE:

(STERN) Maria, show yourself!

FX: FOOTSTEPS HURRYING ALONG STONE CORRIDOR.

HORWITZ:

Quickly, before she gets away!

19: EXT. THE COURT.

FX: RAIN HEAVY; WIND PICKING UP. FOOTSTEPS RUNNING OVER GRAVEL.

PERI:

(CALLING) Where is she? Where did she go?

FX: POLICE CAR SCREECHES UP, ITS BELL CLANGING; DOOR SLAMS.

DOCTOR: (DISTANT)

Peri!

PERI (cont'd):

Doctor! Backhouse is still here! She's using the eye!

DOCTOR:

I know, the readings are off the scale! Where is she – any idea?

FX: CHAPEL DOOR SLAMS.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Look! Someone's gone into the chapel!

FX: DOCTOR RUNS ACROSS GRAVEL.

DOCTOR:

(AS HE GOES) She's in terrible danger!

PETHERBRIDGE:

She's in danger? What about our girls?

20. INT. CHAPEL STAIRWELL.

FX: TWO SETS OF FOOTSTEPS: DOCTOR'S FOOTSTEPS GIVING CHASE.

DOCTOR:

(GIVING CHASE) Dr Backhouse! Maria! This is pointless! There's no way past – the only way out is up!

BACKHOUSE:

(FROM HIGHER) You won't get me! You can't get me as long as I have the eye!

FX: FOOTSTEPS AGAIN, HEADING UP.

21. EXT. ROOFTOP, COLLEGE CHAPEL

FX: WIND AND RAIN HEAVY NOW. NARROW DOOR BANGS OPEN AND THE DOCTOR COMES OUT, SLIPPING ON THE TILES.

DOCTOR:

Steady now... Maria! Listen! You have to give up the eye!

BACKHOUSE: (SLIGHTLY DISTANT)

Never!

DOCTOR:

As long as you have it, you're in mortal danger!

BACKHOUSE:

(LAUGHS) Ridiculous!

DOCTOR:

It isn't safe!

BACKHOUSE:

So I should hand it over? Let the police take me?

DOCTOR:

Forget the police! I'm trying to save your life!

FX: LOW RUMBLE OF THUNDER. BACKHOUSE SLIPS ON WET TILES.

BACKHOUSE:

(GASPS AS SLIPS THEN RECOVERS) It's wartime! They'll hang me!

DOCTOR:

If you don't give up the eye they won't get the chance!

BACKHOUSE:

Rubbish!

DOCTOR:

Can't you feel it? Your hands, shaking? Your feet, slipping?

FX: SCRAPE OF FEET ON TILES.

BACKHOUSE:

It's wet, you idiot! Go down, if you're frightened!

DOCTOR:

Maria, it's the eye. The dark vacuum energy is affecting you on a molecular level. You're falling apart!

BACKHOUSE:

You're lying! You're trying to frighten me!

FX: SOFTLY, THE CRUMBLING NOISE FROM BEFORE.

DOCTOR:

(URGENT) It's not a lie! If you don't want to hand the eye to me, then throw it away! Quickly, before it's too late!

FX: SLIPPING FEET ON TILES; CRUMBLING GATHERS PACE. THUNDER.

BACKHOUSE:

(FRIGHTENED) What's happening? I can't feel my legs!

FX: SLIPS TOWARDS EDGE OF ROOF.

BACKHOUSE (cont'd):

Help me! Doctor... I'm going to fall!

DOCTOR:

I can't unless you throw away the eye! Let me see your hand!

BACKHOUSE:

No!

DOCTOR:

Maria, please!

FX: CRUMBLING GATHERS PACE.

BACKHOUSE:

My hand! Where's my hand--? (SCREAMS AS SHE FALLS FROM THE TOWER)

DOCTOR:

Maria!

22. EXT. THE COURT.

FX: BACKHOUSE'S SCREAMS AS SHE FALLS TO HER DEATH.

PERI:

We've got to help her!

FX: BOTH RUN OVER GRAVEL. CRUMBLING LOUD NOW.

BACKHOUSE:

(MOANS.)

PERI:

Oh no...

PETHERBRIDGE:

Is there anything we can do?

FX: CRUMBLING FADES.

BACKHOUSE:

(GASPS... FADING)

PERI:

Too late. She's gone.

PETHERBRIDGE:

But what's this she was holding? Broken glass?

PERI:

I think... that's what's left of the eye.

23. INT. THE SENIOR COMBINATION ROOM.

FX: NEXT MORNING. STORM HAS PASSED. BIRDSONG. A BICYCLE BELL RINGS. TEA IS SERVED.

PETHERBRIDGE:

A ghastly end! If I hadn't seen Backhouse with my own eyes – or not seen her – I wouldn't believe it.

DOCTOR:

And I'm afraid that not only was she holding the eye when she, well, disintegrated, but that Dr Horwitz's notes were lost in the storm. Blown away across the rooftops.

PERI:

What will this mean for your family, Ruth?

HORWITZ:

I received a telegram earlier. They left Vienna before war was declared. They reached Paris yesterday and will soon be bound for Britain.

DOCTOR:

Good news, indeed.

PERI:

I guess that's what made Backhouse change her plan from blackmail to theft.

DOCTOR:

She knew that she'd no longer have a hold over Ruth once she'd received news that her family were safe.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Perhaps, Doctor, I should ask you rather than Miss Perry, to address the undergraduates?

DOCTOR:

Oh, Peri will do just fine!

PERI:

Must I? Ah! I'll have to get my notes first. Doctor?

DOCTOR:

Hmm?

PERI:

Maybe we should go back to the police box? You know. Where I left my notes when I rang the police?

DOCTOR:

Oh yes!

PERI:

We won't be long.

FX: DOOR CLOSES.

PETHERBRIDGE:

Police box? What police box? There isn't a police box anywhere near - (FX: OPENS THE WINDOW) Where on Earth did that pop up from? Right outside the college gates, and without so much as a by your leave! I shall have them remove it at once...

(CLOSING THEME)



**THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF
THE DOCTOR IN THE NIGHT-TIME.**

BY NEV FOUNTAIN

CAST:

THE DOCTOR:

Space-time traveller.

PERI:

Space-time traveller's American companion.

MICHAEL:

A teenage boy high on the autistic spectrum.

OLIVIA:

Michael's mother.

GEOFF / LLANGRAGEN:

Michael's father / Criminal mastermind of the Genoi.
(with subtle voice effect)

CUSTOMER:

1. NARRATION.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) This is the story of the very great mystery I had to solve. It was the greatest mystery in the world, and not a little mystery. I know lots of little mysteries. I do not know why my best friend Niall eats guinea pig food at school because it tastes horrible. I do not know why my dad's shop has a very rude sign on the front of it, and I do not know why our green rubbish bins are for rubbish that is mainly brown, and our brown rubbish bins are for rubbish that is mainly green. That makes no sense at all, but I know they are all little mysteries because no-one but me is bothered by them.

I have lots of little mysteries because of invisible rules, but I am also certain about one thing. I am certain I am very good at counting things, and I am very good at remembering things once I have counted them, and I know for definite that my father had one hundred and twenty-nine gnomes. He did NOT have one hundred and thirty. I know this for a fact.

These are the gnomes that my Dad had; one. There was a happy gnome with a grey beard, a yellow hat and blue trousers and a surprised gnome with a grey beard, a pipe a blue hat, and red jumper and blue trousers, and -

FX: FAST EDITS

MICHAEL:

- red hat with a yellow beard /grey all over and a -/
Sitting on a Mushroom / bell on the end and a / broken
off at the wrist / Cheeky grin and holding a wheelbarrow,
and that is all my Dad's one hundred and twenty nine
gnomes, but when they were put in the van I was counting
them, because I can't help counting, and on the day after
my dad vanished there were a hundred and thirty gnomes
EXACTLY.

The day I counted the gnomes was a very different kind of day. My school was closed because it was Sunday, and my mum was going out with her sister on a 'hen night' in Canterbury which wasn't at night, and not about hens at all, though she did come back with a box of chicken and chips from the shop on the corner which she knocked on the floor and cried. I get sad over dead animals sometimes, but only when they are just dead, like our cat Percival who got run over outside our house, and his guts

were all over the road like sausages and string, but I have never cried over a fried chicken.

So my dad took me to his work, which is 'Houseproud', which is a big store that sells nails and lawnmowers and huge long planks of wood and baths which you can't wash in, because they are not attached to anything.

2. INT. DIY STORE. DAY. (CONTINUOUS)

FX: SHOP ATMOS.

MICHAEL:

Dad, your shop still says 'Do it Yourself' on the front. You have not changed it.

GEOFF:

(WEARY) No, Michael, I told you many times...

MICHAEL:

'Do it Yourself' is very rude thing to say. You must put a 'please' on the end or something, because then you wouldn't (offend customers)

GEOFF:

Put this jacket on. You're helping me today.

MICHAEL:

But this is not my jacket. It says 'Johnson' on it.

'Johnson is not my name.'

GEOFF:

I know, Bob's not here so you can wear his jacket.

MICHAEL:

But what if they call me 'Johnson'.

GEOFF:

They won't.

MICHAEL:

But what if they do.

GEOFF:

They. Won't.

MICHAEL:

(AFTER PAUSE) But what if they (do)

GEOFF:

Just go round the store, and help the customers, okay?

3. INT. DIY STORE. DAY.

MICHAEL:

Hello.

CUSTOMER:

Ah...Hello.

MICHAEL:

My name is not 'Johnson' in case you're wondering.

CUSTOMER:

Okay.

MICHAEL:

It's Michael Andrew Jennings. And I am fourteen years, eight months, three days and nine minutes old at the time of me telling you this.

CUSTOMER:

Oh, right.

MICHAEL:

You're looking at candles.

CUSTOMER:

Yes, they're very nice.

MICHAEL:

When you light them they smell nice.

CUSTOMER:

Oh, really?

MICHAEL:

Yes, really. (PAUSE) I'll show you how they work.

CUSTOMER:

No, that's fine really.

MICHAEL:

I really should. That is my job. To tell people my name is not 'Johnson' and help customers.

FX: FIRE ALARM. SPRINKLERS. SCREAMS.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) Do not light candles in shops. That is an invisible rule. An invisible rule is a rule that no one tells you

about until you break it, and then everyone gets cross and tells you shouldn't have broken the rule, even though they did not tell you the rule, it is always a very important rule.

My dad got very angry with me for breaking the invisible rule I didn't know about, and because I was wet and the alarm hurt my ears, I did that thing I do when I can't cope. I rolled up tight into a ball like a hedgehog, and screamed until I didn't know where the alarm stopped and my scream started.

(MICHAEL'S SCREAM)

FX: FIRE ALARM STOPS

(MICHAEL'S SCREAM STOPS)

Then Dad's boss turned up, and he folded his arms, and he said he wanted a word with my dad.

I had to wait in the car for a very long time, which I did not like because I just had my school books to read, which I did not read because I wasn't at school.

After a VERY long time my dad got in the car and said to me:

4. INT. CAR PARKED IN CAR PARK. DAY. (CONTINUOUS)

GEOFF:

(AWE) Michael, you don't belong on this planet.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) Well, he might of said it in that kind of way. But he might of said it in a

GEOFF:

(DISGUSTED) Michael, you don't belong on this planet.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) sort of way. But I think it was the first way, because when you tell someone something important like they're not from this planet, then it should be said in a proper way.

GEOFF:

Did you tell anyone at work about the gnomes?

MICHAEL:

(NOT V/O) No dad. You said not to.

GEOFF:

You did, didn't you?

MICHAEL:

No dad, the gnomes have always been our secret.

GEOFF:

(SIGHS) I'd like to believe you, Michael, but I just can't. I've always wanted to trust you, but I just... can't. You've let me down too many times.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) Then we went home, and he rang mum and got her to come home early from her hen night, so he could have an argument with her too.

I wondered if mum was telling dad off for telling me that I was from another planet. Perhaps that's why I break all the invisible rules, because people who get born on Earth get born with the invisible rules all inside their heads. I went into the garden and sat with the gnomes.

And THAT is when I counted the gnomes. One hundred and twenty-nine. When I was allowed back inside the house, my

dad was putting his fishing clothes on, with his rod and his silly hat and his wellies. My mum said:

5. INT. HALLWAY. (CONTINUOUS)

OLIVIA:

Where do you think you're going?

GEOFF:

The pub, obviously.

OLIVIA:

You're not going anywhere. Not with those idiots.

GEOFF:

Why not? It's Sunday. I've got nothing else to do, have I?

FX: FRONT DOOR SLAM.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) I suspected that he was not going to the pub at all. That was a type of lie that people sometimes use. I suspected that he was going fishing on a boat in the sea with his mates my mum doesn't like.

It was then I thought how like a gnome my dad looked with his silly hat and his fishing rod and his big wellies, and I think that gave me a clue in solving the great mystery.

When I woke up because there was lots of phone calls, and there were policeman at the door, and my mum started crying about the chicken on the floor, and Auntie Peggy turned up in her nightgown and drove me to her house, which I like because she has SKY on her telly and she eats cereals with chocolate on them. I stayed there for days, and Auntie Peggy didn't even mention school, so neither did I, in case she had forgotten and I didn't want to remind her.

FX: LARGE LORRY SOUND. BEEPING AS IT REVERSES.

MICHAEL:

When she drove me back to our house there was a 'Houseproud' van outside, and two men with 'Jones' and 'McCann' on their pockets got out and they put the gnomes in the back of their van very quickly, and I counted the gnomes, because I can't not count things, and there were a hundred and thirty. That was the GREAT MYSTERY!

6. EXT. FRONT GARDEN. DAY. (CONTINUOUS)

MICHAEL:

Mum, where has dad gone?

OLIVIA:

Michael, I'm afraid he's died.

MICHAEL:

Died?

OLIVIA:

He was...he was on that dinghy in the papers. The one that tipped over.

MICHAEL:

Oh.

OLIVIA:

Are you alright, Michael. Do you want a hug?

MICHAEL:

No thank you. That doesn't make sense, really. People don't die when you're not looking.

OLIVIA:

They do.

MICHAEL:

Not on television.

OLIVIA:

This isn't television.

MICHAEL:

It doesn't make sense.

OLIVIA:

It never does.

MICHAEL:

Can you tell me when he's coming back?

OLIVIA:

(SCARED) He's not coming back Michael. I'm afraid!

MICHAEL:

(V/O) Or she might have said it like

OLIVIA:

(ANGRY) He's not coming back, Michael. I'm afraid.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) I think she must have said it in a scared way, because the other way meant she was angry at me which makes no sense.

7. EXT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM/BACK GARDEN. NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

MICHAEL:

(V/O) That night I stood at my window and saw a man with yellow trousers creeping around in our back garden. Then a girl climbed over the fence, and I could see her knees.

FX: DISTANT, THEY'RE IN GARDEN, WE'RE STILL IN BEDROOM.

DOCTOR:

Find anything?

PERI:

(OUT OF BREATH) Nope. Just a pile of tyres, a rusty engine and a really angry dog called 'Killer'.

DOCTOR:

Well, it was definitely this address (MOVES OUT OF EARSHOT)

FX: DOG BARKING

MICHAEL:

(V/O) I stood there in the window for a very long time, and thought they must be looking for the 130th gnome, so I stroked my chin, because that is what people do when they are thinking and making a clever plan.

8. INT. DIY STORE. DAY.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) At the weekend I went back to 'Houseproud'. I went around the store, looking for my dad, and then I saw all of his gnomes on a plastic bit of grass and a pond with bubblewrap pretending to be water.

I worked out which gnome was the 130th gnome; dad never owned one with a silver cap, and a necklace round his neck that flashed blue. I knew that there was only one logical explanation - my dad had been changed into a gnome.

I knew what I had to do. I bought the gnome with my pocket money and when I did I made Janice on the Tills cry, and I did not know why, but that is a little mystery, and I had a much bigger mystery to solve.

9. INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM. (CONTINUOUS)

MICHAEL:

(V/O) I taped my interview with my dad because that is what police do on television.

FX: CLICK. DISTORT FROM NOW AS THOUGH ON TAPE RECORDING.

MICHAEL:

(NOT V/O) Interview commencing at 11.26. Present in the room is Michael Andrew Jennings, and Geoffrey Jennings, currently a gnome. Dad? Are you alright? Don't be scared.

FX: DOORBELL.

MICHAEL:

I'm from another planet and people from other planets are very good at sorting things out.

FX: DOORBELL

OLIVIA: (DISTANT SHOUT)

Michael, get the door! I'm in the shower.

MICHAEL:

Interview terminated at 11.27.

FX: CLICK.

10. INT. HALLWAY. (CONTINUOUS)

FX: FEET DOWNSTAIRS. DOOR OPEN.

DOCTOR:

Hello young man. And what's your name?

MICHAEL:

Michael Andrew Jennings.

DOCTOR:

Well, Michael, I'm the Doctor and this is my friend Peri.

PERI:

Hi Michael.

MICHAEL:

Hello Peri. You have a boy's name.

PERI:

Well, not exactly.

MICHAEL:

Yes, exactly. I know two boys called Perry, but no girls. So it is exactly a boy's name.

DOCTOR:

Very logical.

PERI:

We'd like to speak to you about your father.

MICHAEL:

My father can't talk to you at the moment because he is in a shoebox under my bed and so he is indisposed at the moment.

PERI:

Oh...kay...

OLIVIA:

(COMING DOWN STAIRS) Michael! Get away from the door, I'll handle this. (TO DOCTOR AND PERI) Hello, what is it?

PERI:

Sorry to bother you, but we need to talk about...

OLIVIA:

His father, yes I heard you.

DOCTOR:

It's very important.

OLIVIA:

You're from the council aren't you? Social workers. You can always tell.

DOCTOR:

Madam do we-- ? [look like social workers?]

PERI:

Yes, we're social workers. Making sure everything's alright. Okay Doctor?

OLIVIA:

Please. It's too early to talk about it with Michael. (LOWERS VOICE) Geoff went fishing because he lost his job. He always used to go fishing before the shop made him work Sundays. Michael must have told someone about his gnomes.

PERI:

His gnomes?

OLIVIA:

I don't want Michael to think it's his fault.

DOCTOR:

Tell us about the gnomes, Mrs Jennings.

PERI:

It's very important.

OLIVIA:

He didn't exactly buy the gnomes. He took one or two, and then – he got a bit carried away. Mainly because Michael liked them when he was little. I told him he was spending too much money but he said he had a staff discount. Once I found out, there were too many of them to get rid of. Michael must have said something to someone at work, because his boss came round. He knew exactly where to go. I don't want Michael to think any of this was his fault.

DOCTOR:

Madam, prepare yourself for a shock. Michael didn't tell anyone about the gnomes.

OLIVIA:

He didn't? How do you know?

DOCTOR:

We have reason to believe one of the gnomes informed on your husband.

OLIVIA:

What?

DOCTOR:

Or to be more exact, the Llengragon of Genoi. We intercepted a message beamed from this location to a DIY store. It said 'come to 12 Arkadia gardens and learn something about Geoffrey Jennings. Look in the back garden'. It was broadcast on a frequency used by an alien life form which closely resembles a garden gnome.

PERI:

I'm sorry. He gets like this sometimes.

DOCTOR:

We have to find that alien. If you are holding out on us, then you are being grossly irresponsible. The whole planet could be in great danger.

FX: DOOR SLAM. LETTERBOX RATTLE. WE MOVE OUTSIDE.

DOCTOR:

(THROUGH LETTERBOX) If you change your mind, we'll be inside the telephone box at the end of the road.

(PAUSE)

PERI:

(MUFFLED) Why did you say that?

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Why did I say what, specifically?

PERI:

You want me to be specific?

DOCTOR:

Yes.

PERI:

Specifically? Everything. We could have persuaded her, but as usual, you come in with all that stuff about aliens and the planet being in imminent danger.

DOCTOR:

I never said imminent. But I confess I do like the word 'imminent' and I may use it next time.

11. INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM.

FX: DISTORT AS ON TAPE RECORDING.

MICHAEL:

Interview resumed at 11.33. Present in the room is Michael Andrew Jennings, and Geoffrey Jennings, currently a gnome. Dad, can you hear me?

LLENGRAGAN:

Yes, Michael. I can hear you.

MICHAEL:

I knew it . I knew you were my dad. I solved a great mystery. And I rescued you. That was a very good thing I did.

LLENGRAGAN:

No it wasn't Michael. It was a bad thing.

MICHAEL:

Ah, I think you'll find on reflection that it was a good thing I did.

LLENGRAGAN:

No, I wanted to go to the shop. It's important that you take me back, Michael. If I go back to the shop, I can go to a better place and make lots of new friends.

MICHAEL:

No, dad. If you go to the shop you will be sold and end up in a strange garden and I won't see you anymore.

LLENGRAGAN:

Come with me then.

MICHAEL:

But I have school.

LLENGRAGAN:

Don't worry about school.

MICHAEL:

And mum. She can come too?

LLENGRAGAN:

No, Michael. She can't come.

MICHAEL:

But she has to come.

LLENGRAGAN:

She can't. She wouldn't like it.

MICHAEL:

If we both go she'll be on her own and she'll get even more sad.

LLENGRAGAN:

Michael, she can't come!

MICHAEL:

But I want her to.

LLENGRAGAN:

No! Michael! You don't understand. She can't come, and that is the end of the matter!

FX: SLAM OF TOYBOX.

LLENGRAGAN:

(MUFFLED) Michael, what are you doing?

MICHAEL:

I do understand, because I understand lots of things now, because I solved a great mystery, you're getting locked in my toybox until you find your manners.

LLENGRAGAN:

(M) **MICHAEL:**, no!

FX: CLICK. TAPE RECORDING ENDS.

MICHAEL: (V/O)

Over the next few hours I listened to him shout, then he stopped, so I opened it a crack and he tried to grab me, which isn't the way a responsible adult should behave, so I shook the box hard until he stopped shouting.

I wondered about what I could do, and then I stroked my chin again and worked out a very clever plan. I bought another gnome and painted the hat silver and made it a blue necklace, and put it in the shed window, and I left the light on, and waited for the man in yellow trousers to come back.

12. EXT. BACK GARDEN. NIGHT.

FX: RATTLE OF HANDLE. THUDDING ON INSIDE OF DOOR.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Hello? Hello?

MICHAEL:

Hello.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Oh. Hello again Michael. I seem to be locked in this shed. I don't suppose you could help me out?

MICHAEL:

I don't think so. That would be a waste of time.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) I fail to see how it would be waste of time.

MICHAEL:

(SIGHS, IT'S A STUPID QUESTION) I just locked you in. It would be a waste of time if I let you out again, just after I locked you in. I think you would agree that would be a waste of time.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) I agree. That would be a great waste of time.

MICHAEL:

Exactly. I got you in my trap. It's a very clever trap.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Oh yes, very clever.

MICHAEL:

I saw you were looking for a special gnome. That was very clever of me.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Very clever indeed. You are certainly a very special young man.

MICHAEL:

I used to be special, but then they said that calling me special was rude, so now I am not special anymore. I don't know how that works. It's an invisible rule. I don't like invisible rules.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Oh, invisible rules are terrible. They're the bane of my life. I'm always breaking them.

MICHAEL:

Me too. If the rules are so important, why not tell everyone what they are?

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Exactly! It would save a lot of bother.

MICHAEL:

Yes. It is a lot of bother. I don't know the invisible rules because I am from another planet.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Michael, we seem to have a great deal in common. (PAUSE) May I ask a question?

MICHAEL:

Yes. I'm good at questions.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Why have you locked me in the shed?

MICHAEL:

Because of your trousers.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED. THROWN) What about my trousers?

MICHAEL:

I watched you go about in the back gardens for three nights now, and you have worn the same yellow trousers for three nights.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Well...

MICHAEL:

My mum says wearing the same trousers every day is dirty.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Well I do have an explanation-- [for that, you see I...]

MICHAEL:

There is only one creature in the universe that never changes its trousers. And that is gnomes. And you are bigger than a normal gnome, therefore you are the chief gnome.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) I think I'm beginning to see your logic.

FX: BANG. BANG. BANG.

MICHAEL:

Are you trying to break out of my dad's shed?

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) No.

MICHAEL:

You are. I can hear you. That's vandalism. Vandalism is very wrong.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Michael, nobody disapproves of vandalism more than me. After all, you're speaking to someone who's met the original vandals. Now there's a group who didn't believe in changing their trousers. You really should let me out you know. You can't keep me in here forever.

MICHAEL:

You can come out when you promise to change my dad back from being a gnome.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Michael, that gnome under your bed is many things, but he is not your father. Do you hear me, Michael?

MICHAEL:

He is. He knew my name.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) The Genoi are very cunning Michael. They are a silicon based life form, genetically bred for war. They have been equipped with low level telepathy so they can extract information from the enemy. He would be able to read your mind and learn your name. Do you understand?

(SILENCE)

Are you still listening to me? He is not your father.
(PAUSE) Michael?

MICHAEL:

I suppose you're right. He doesn't sound much like my dad. He is very rude. (GOING AWAY) Wait here. I'll just go and get him.

DOCTOR:

(MUFFLED) Michael! You haven't unlocked the door! (PAUSE)
Michael!

13. INT. SHED. NIGHT. (CONTINUOUS)

FX: DOOR UNLOCKED.

DOCTOR:

Thank you Michael. That shed was distressingly smaller on the inside and I was -

FX: DOOR OPEN.

DOCTOR:

Oh. Hello there.

OLIVIA:

You're not a social worker.

DOCTOR:

No. I'm not.

OLIVIA:

You've got ten seconds to tell me what you're doing in my garden, or I'll hit you with this spade.

DOCTOR:

I've told you.

OLIVIA:

About aliens.

DOCTOR:

Yes, aliens, Mrs Jeffries. Michael's gnome is in fact one of a number of killing machines, made by the Galactic Coalition. It was decided that the gnomes - the Genoi - were too dangerous so they put them all here. The high ozone content of your atmosphere acts as a natural paralysing agent on the Genoi. By putting them here they were reasonably certain none would get off the planet and wreak havoc.

OLIVIA:

Oh, yeah, right-- [this makes so much sense]

DOCTOR:

Listen! But the leader of the Genoi, Llengragan, invented a personal dampening field to counteract the effect and now he's returned to Earth to liberate his fellow gnomes. My friend and I have been trying to locate him and we believe he may now be in your son's possession.

FX: OLIVIA PUTS DOWN SPADE.

OLIVIA:

Michael doesn't have a gnome.

DOCTOR:

Yes he does.

OLIVIA:

No he doesn't.

DOCTOR:

Yes he does. He bought one of his father's from the DIY store and brought it back here.

OLIVIA:

Oh no...

PERI:

(APPROACHING) Doctor?

DOCTOR:

Peri! Over here!

PERI:

Doctor!

DOCTOR:

Good news. Michael has Llengragon, I've convinced him it's not his father, and he's bringing it here.

OLIVIA:

(LAUGHS) No he's not.

DOCTOR:

He is. He told me.

OLIVIA:

You idiot.

DOCTOR:

Me?

OLIVIA:

Yes you. (LAUGHS) You're just like Michael.

DOCTOR:

What?

OLIVIA:

Am I right, Peri?

PERI:

Sorry?

OLIVIA:

Your friend the Doctor. He doesn't see the emotions beneath the surface.

PERI:

He... Well no. Not always. Sometimes...

OLIVIA:

Has it not occurred to you, Doctor, that deep down, he bought the gnome because he misses his dad?

DOCTOR:

He's solving a mystery and-- [he wants to]

OLIVIA:

And he just needs something to help him remember?
And has it not occurred to you that he wouldn't want to give it up, even if he suspected it wasn't his father?

DOCTOR:

Oh. No. No I didn't.

14. INT. DIY STORE. NIGHT.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) I put him in my rucksack and took him to where he wanted to go, which, if you remember, was the 'Houseproud' DIY store.

FX: DOORS, SHOP ATMOS

MICHAEL:

We walked in straight away, but I thought that they always locked the shop at night. Perhaps there is an invisible rule which says that doors opened on thursday nights.

The gnome went to the pond full of bubble wrap, and he pulled the bubble wrap off and there was a machine under it. He took a fishing rod from another gnome and started poking away at the machine. I said:

MICHAEL:

(NOT V/O) What are you doing?

LLENGRAGEN:

Oh, you'll see. I've got some friends I want you to meet. I'm dead keen for the whole world to meet them. Dead keen. (LAUGHS)

MICHAEL:

I do not think you mean what you are saying. When people say they have friends they want you to meet on television they mean something completely horrible. Especially if they laugh at the end like you just did.

LLENGRAGEN:

Is that a fact?

MICHAEL:

And especially when they say 'dead' in that funny way, when you did not need to say 'dead' at all.

LLENGRAGEN:

Oh do they. How interesting.

MICHAEL:

I actually think not saying what you mean is rude and people should say what they mean at all times.

LLENGRAGEN:

Okay, okay, just shut up will you? You are irritating. Okay, I'm not your dad, at all.

MICHAEL:

I know that.

LLENGRAGEN:

I'm not a gnome either. I'm a killer robot, and this device activates lots of other killer robots. I will liberate them and together we will leave this planet a smouldering wasteland.

MICHAEL:

Thank you. That wasn't so difficult was it?

DOCTOR:

(APPROACHING) Llengragen! It's all over. Put the fishing rod down and step away from the pond.

LLENGRAGEN:

Ah, Doctor, I knew you would show up sooner or later. Sorry, you're a bit late, old son. Meet the 13th Genoi battalion.

FX: PULSING NOISE CONTINUING (UNDER)

GNOMES:

(MASSED GIGGLING, UNDER...)

FX: CRASHING.

DOCTOR:

Michael, come over to me, get away from the gnomes.

MICHAEL:

No...

DOCTOR:

Michael!

MICHAEL:

No, leave me alone now. Done now. Want quiet. Want quiet. Happy place. Happy place!

OLIVIA:

(APPROACHING) Michael! This is no time for happy place!

MICHAEL:

No...

PERI:

Doctor! There's too many of them!

DOCTOR:

Try and lead them away from Michael!

FX: CRASH!

PERI:

It's no good, they're guarding the machine.

LLENGRAGEN:

Leave Doctor. Save yourself from the apocalypse while you still can.

DOCTOR:

Come on, Michael!

MICHAEL:

Quiet. Happy place! Put me down! (SCREAMS)

DOCTOR:

Head for the garden furniture! We need something to fight with!

OLIVIA:

You little monster! You snitched on my Geoff! You little
—

FX: CRASH!

DOCTOR:

Where's Michael? Where's he gone? Michael!

DOCTOR/OLIVIA/PERI:

Michael!

MICHAEL:

(V/O) I know there was noise, and there was shouting, but something in my head told me to be calm. Perhaps it was my dad inside my head. I don't know. I did not roll into a ball and scream. I knew the machine was bringing the gnomes to life. How it was doing it was another mystery, but I knew how to solve the mystery about how to make it stop. So I lit lots of scented candles...

FX: FIRE ALARM. SPRINKLERS.

LLANRAGEN:

No! Noooooooo!

MICHAEL:

And we all got very wet, and the machine exploded,

FX: EXPLOSION

MICHAEL:

...and all the gnomes stopped moving about, and even though the doctor was very wet, so now he would finally have to change his trousers, he looked very pleased indeed, and he shook my hand and said.

FX: STORE RETURNED TO CALM.

DOCTOR:

You are a very special boy, Michael.

MICHAEL:

(NOT V/O) I am not special, because-- [that is an invisible rule]

DOCTOR:

I know, because that's an invisible rule. Let me tell you, Michael, there are invisible rules I follow, and invisible rules I do not.

FX: POLICE SIRENS.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) And then we heard police cars, and we went home.

FX: SIRENS FADE, WE MOVE INTO MICHAEL'S HOUSE.

MICHAEL:

We had sandwiches, and stayed up until long after my bedtime. Then the Doctor, and Peri with a boy's name had to leave, but I knew the Doctor would talk to me before he left, because he looked at mum in a funny way, and mum looked at him in a funny way.

15. EXT. BACK GARDEN. NIGHT. (CONTINUOUS)

MICHAEL:

(V/O) So I sat with the Doctor in the back garden, and looked at the stars, and together we solved the greatest mystery of them all.

MICHAEL:

(NOT V/O) I know my dad is dead. I understand that. But he went away as well. Why do they go away as well? Dying is bad enough, but going away as well? It doesn't make sense.

DOCTOR:

No.

MICHAEL:

That is what confused me. So where is he? Just gone?

DOCTOR:

He's in what I consider to be a very special place.

MICHAEL:

Please don't say heaven. Clouds are just evaporated water. I know this for a fact.

DOCTOR:

I was thinking of the past. A lot of people think the past is a sad place, but I visit it a lot, and let me tell you, I find it just as exciting as the present and the future. Your father lives there now, and all the moments where he is a living, breathing loving father are there too, all stored safely, and they will never go away.

MICHAEL:

Can I visit him? I'd like to see him again.

DOCTOR:

Of course you can, Michael. Anyone who can remember 130 gnomes can certainly visit him. Just close your eyes. (PAUSE) Can you see him?

MICHAEL:

Yes, yes I can! I can see him.

DOCTOR:

I told you. And you can visit the past just as easily as me, because, as we both know, you're a very special boy.

MICHAEL:

(V/O) I can see him. He is wearing his brown shoes and his old jeans with no knees, and his shirt with 'Just do it' on it, and there is dirt on his shirt because he has been in the garden, and he hasn't shaved that morning, because his chin is very spikey..

FX: GARDEN GATE OPENS AND SHUTS.

MICHAEL:

And there is a mark on his wrist where his watch used to be, and his belt hasn't gone through all the loops on his jeans,

FX: DISTANT DEMATERIALISATION.

MICHAEL:

(TO FADE) and he is looking at me, and holding his rusty spade, and he is smiling at me, and he is telling me I solved a great mystery, and I am very, very special.

END.